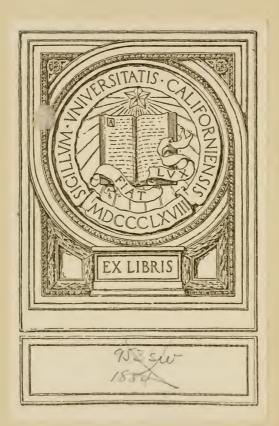
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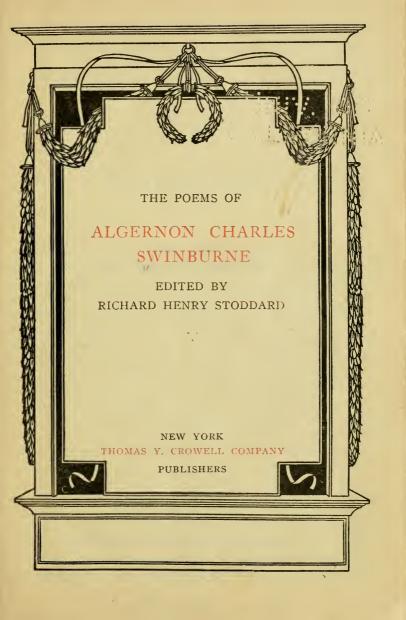
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# INTRODUCTION.

If the history of English poetry teaches us any thing, it teaches us that the succession of poets who have illustrated it since Chaucer is divided into two classes, one of which may be said to represent the characteristics of the periods wherein it flourished, while the other may be said to represent the characteristics of the line which it perpetuates. Belonging to the first class were the successors of Shakespeare, who was an evolution of the dramatic element of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the successors of Dryden, particularly Pope, who was an evolution of the satiric element of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and the successors of Thomson, particularly Cowper and Wordsworth, who were an evolution of the natureelement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There are, of course, other elements than those I have indicated, in the verse of these poets and their followers, for no poet worthy of the name was ever content to play upon one string; but it was rather as evolutions of these elements that they rose to distinction, and are remembered now, than as intense individualities such as from time to time appear in religion, in philosophy, in politics, and in art, and found dynasties. The first of these powerful personalities in English poetry was Christopher Marlowe. Born two months before Shakespeare, the son of a shoemaker at Canterbury, nothing is known of his childhood or youth except that he was admitted to the King's School in his native city,

where he remained three or four years; and that he was removed to Cambridge, where he became a member of Benet College, and was matriculated as pensioner shortly after the completion of his seventeenth year. Two years later he took the degree of A.B., and, four years later, that of A.M. He is believed to have owed his maintenance at college to some wealthy relative, or some patron whose favor he won by early indications of genius; and it is plain, Dyce thinks, that he was educated with a view to one of the learned professions: most probably he was intended for the Church. But churchman he was not to be; for, like Greene and Nash, who had preceded him, he made his way up to London, and became a player and a dramatist. Precedity when this occurred has not been ascertained: all that is certain is, that his first play, the first part of "Tamburlaine the Great," was performed at the Curtain before his twenty-third year.

The earliest flowering of the English drama, the germs of which must be sought in the rude interludes of Skelton and Heywood, was the "Gorboduc" of Sackville and Newton, which was played before Queen Elizabeth at Whitehall, about two years anterior to the birth of Marlowe. The production of "Gorboduc" was an important event, partly because it was the first work written in English for scenic representation that deserved the name of a tragedy, but more because it was the first in which the rhyming quatrains, or couplets, of earlier playwrights were supplanted by the new measure, blank verse, which Lord Surrey had discovered more than twenty years before. Professing to deal with history, - for Gorboduc figures in the old chronicles as a king of Britain, - it was followed by a series of more or less historical plays, among which may be mentioned "Appius and Virginia," "Damon and Pythias," "Cambyses," "Marius and Sylla," "The Battle of Alcazar," "Edward I.," "Alphonsus, King of Arragon," and lastly "Tamburlaine the Great." If Marlowe went up to London, as he is supposed to have done, with the expectation of finding a larger field for the exercise of his talents there than at Cambridge, he went at the right time; for never before nor since was the demand for such talents as he possessed so clamorous or so constant. It had been stimulated, if not created, by three or four

men like himself, one being Thomas Nash, who had been his contemporary at Cambridge; another, Robert Greene, also a Cambridge man; and a third, George Peele, who had taken the degree of M.A. at Oxford. They were authors, in that they wrote for their livelihood, and hack-writers, in that they wrote what the stationers wanted. Of the three, Greene was the most popular; for he had a knack of scribbling stories that hit the taste of the time, and he could manufacture a play at a pinch when he had an order for one. They were loose and careless livers, rioting at taverns and ordinaries when a successful play or pamphlet put money in their purses, and skulking in out-of-the-way lodgings when their money was gone. The period was prolific in poets, of whom the most noted were Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, who, besides "Gorboduc," had written the Induction to "The Mirror for Magistrates;" Edmund Spenser, who had written the "Shepherd's Calendar;" William Warner, who had written "Albion's England;" John Lyly, who had written "Euphues," and several court comedies; George Gascoigne, who had written "The Steel Glass," and other poesies; and George Whetstone, who had written "Promos and Cassandra," which was one day to be of use to Shakespeare in writing "Measure for Measure." It was to make his way among poets like these, whose works were no doubt known to him, that Marlowe went up to London; and he made his way at once with "Tamburlaine," greatly to the dissatisfaction of Nash, - who, in his preliminary epistle to Greene's "Menaphon," satirized him and his measure, which he described as the swelling bombast of bragging blank verse, - as well as to the dissatisfaction of Greene himself, whose popularity as a dramatist was suddenly eclipsed. One must be somewhat familiar with Elizabethan poetry before he can fully understand the significance of the dramatic revolution that followed the production of "Tamburlaine." He should at least read "Gorboduc," and two or three of the plays of Peele and Greene, - say, Peele's "Arraignment of Paris," and Greene's "Orlando Furioso," - before he reads "Tamburlaine," which will amply repay him for that dreary preparation, and clearly demonstrate the superior genius of Marlowe. Conscious of his powers, and confident of himself, he had a greater aptitude for dramatic writing than any of his contemporaries. His impetuous spirit refused to be fettered by rhyme, which he felt was inadequate for dramatic purposes; and, if Surrey had not discovered blank verse, we may be sure that he would have discovered it, for his use of it, all things considered, was the greatest discovery of all. He was the first to divine its capacities, and to develop them heroically. He knew what he was about when he sat down to write "Tamburlaine."

"From jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits,
And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
Threatening the world with high astounding terms,
And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.
View but his picture in this tragic glass,
And then applaud his fortunes as you please."

The first part of "Tamburlaine," which was represented, we are assured, before Marlowe had attained his twenty-third year, was speedily succeeded by the second part.

"The general welcomes Tamburlaine receiv'd,
When he arrived last upon the stage,
Have made our poet pen his Second Part,
Where Death cuts off the progress of his pomp,
And murderous Fates throw all his triumphs down."

"Tamburlaine" was succeeded by "The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus," "The Jew of Malta," "Edward the Second," and "The Massacre of Paris." It may interest the reader of this sketch to know that the celebrated actor Edward Allyn, the founder of Dulwich College, played the part of Tamburlaine in a copper-laced coat and red velvet breeches, and the part of Barabas the Jew with a false nose. It would seem, indeed, as Dyce has pointed out, that, on the early English stage, the children of Israel were always furnished with an extra quantity of nose, as if a race so universally hated could hardly be made to appear too ugly. The career of Marlowe was

more illustrious, it seems to me, than that of any other English poet; for no other English poet, so far as I remember, ever surpassed all his contemporaries at so early an age as he, or ever achieved so much distinction by his first work. Other poets, the most eminent, served their apprenticeship in the divine art: from the beginning, Marlowe was a master. That his success was resented, as we are told it was, by Greene and Nash, was natural; for, not to insist upon the jealousy and envy with which the poetic temperament has always been credited, and of which they had, no doubt, their full share, it touched them in that vital part, — the pocket. They had the market to themselves before this young interloper from Cambridge set up a stall of his own, and had his wares preferred to theirs. It was monstrous, sirs, monstrous.

The personal history of Marlowe was probably not worse than the personal history of most of his dramatic contemporaries, - certainly not worse than that of Greene, - but at best it was bad enough. He was dissolute, debauched, profligate, addicted to his cups; a swaggering roisterer, always ready for brawls. But others were as ready as he; and among them was one Francis Archer, with whom he was feasting one summer-day at Deptford, and upon whom, while they were playing at backgammon, he suddenly drew his dagger, intending to stab him in the back. The intention was perceived by Archer, who avoided the blow, and, drawing his own dagger, struck him in the eye, bringing away the brains as he withdrew the weapon. In a few hours he was dead. Such was Christopher Marlowe, who perished in his thirtieth year, the greatest poet of his age, with the exception of William Shakespeare, whose greatness had still to manifest itself. The death of Marlowe was seized upon with avidity by the Puritans, and he was held up as an awful example of the judgment of God. He was a free-thinker, an atheist, a blasphemer; there was no known crime that was not imputed to him. As no one man could have been guilty of all the wickedness he was charged with, and as one of his accusers was afterwards hanged at Tyburn, let us charitably render the Scotch verdict — "Not proven." The Devil himself is not as black as he is painted by the theologians.

The great gift of poetry - the greatest which Heaven has conferred upon mankind, and the one which, if well balanced and wisely exercised, confers the greatest pleasure on mankind - is a dangerous gift to its possessor. It separates him from his fellows, whose pursuits are of material and not spiritual things; and it creates for him a life in which they have no share. A law unto itself, it is lawlessness to them. If we cast our eyes back from the poets of the nineteenth century to the poets of the sixteenth century, - from Swinburne to Marlowe, say, - they will not rest upon many who command respect for what they were, as well as what they wrote; who were men first, and poets afterward. We find, in this small group of immortals, the gracious figure of Shakespeare, the stern figure of Milton, the thoughtful figure of Wordsworth: we do not find Eurns there, nor Byron, nor Shelley. Many of the errors with which the personal history of the English poets is stained were, no doubt, temperamental; others appear to have been hereditary: but the greater number, I fear, were sheer wilfulness. The consciousness of great powers is a misfortune to all but the greatest minds, for these alone distinguish between their use and abuse.

"Oh! it is excellent
To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant."

Power for power's sake is not poetry. Byron never learned this truth; but the young Keats—the manikin whom he wished somebody would flay alive—knew it instinctively. Hear him:—

"A drainless shower
Of light is poesy: 'tis the supreme of power;
'Tis might half slumbering on its own right arm;
The very archings of her eyelids charm
A thousand willing agents to obey;
And still she governs with the mildest sway:
But strength alone, though of the Muses born,
Is like a fallen angel; trees uptorn,
Darkness and worms, and shrouds, and sepulchres,
Delight it; for it feeds upon the burrs

And thorns of life; forgetting the great end Of poesy,—that it should be a friend To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts, of man."

As we define poetry, which is not to be defined, so we divide the poets into schools, which, strictly speaking, are not schools. poetry of different periods is marked by certain characteristics, which are strong in some poets and weak in others, and which suggest other characteristics that have not yet manifested themselves. What most impresses me in the poetry of Marlowe, -a feeling of prodigality, a sense of daring, the splendor of a fiery spirit, — I find in no poet since, save in Algernon Charles Swinburne. I find great qualities in the old dramatists, - in Kyd, in Chapman, in Tourneur, in Ford, in Webster, - strange passions, strong situations, the terror and the pathos of tragedy; but, with the exception of the scenes of Webster, they are not the body of their work, but rather the light that is flashed upon it, and the darkness in which that light is suddenly swallowed up. When we have left the great race of the old dramatists, - of whom Shirley, Lamb says, was the last, - we have left the glory and the greatness of English verse. We are among clever men, - satirists and wits, like Dryden and Pope and their followers, writers of natural description like Thomson, writers of pastorals and elegies, like Shenstone and Lyttleton; but we are not among poets, — not among the makers. There is that in Collins and Gray which commands our admiration; in Cowper, which commands our respect; in Burns, which commands our love, — which ripples in smiles, and melts in the mist of tears. But the fervor, the force, the elemental energy of the old masters, is not theirs. They are fettered by poetic traditions. These traditions were loosened by Wordsworth and Coleridge, who quickened the materiality of their predecessors by the injection of their own personality, which they mistook for philosophy; and by Scott, who discovered the metrical romance in balladry, or recovered it from this balladry, wherein, like the famous old German emperor, it had long slumbered, hearkening in dreams for the striking of the hour that was to awaken it. The fetters were loosened, but not broken, until Byron and Shelley rose in their young might, and indig

nantly rent them asunder, restoring to song its ancient kingdom, and to man his freedom of mind. One has not to read far in Byron and Shelley, before he feels that a new force is at work in English verse, and the determination of this feeling in himself is the determination of his intellectual condition. If he believes in the old order of things, it is a destructive force, and he condemns it: if he believes in a new order of things, it is a reconstructive force, and he applauds it. But whatever he believes, he recognizes the force. It is directed, in the poetry of Byron, against society and politics; in the poetry of Shelley, against society, politics, and religion. One struck at the State, the other at the State and the Church. Of course their poetry was informed with other elements than those that are implied in this brief statement, for they were poets as well as revolutionists, - creators as well as destroyers; but in the main it was what I have indicated, a fearless, resolute warfare with whatever men worshipped and feared. It is not ended yet, but it will be one day.

> "For freedom's battle, once begun, Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son, Though baffled oft, is ever won."

There have been no sudden makings of splendid names in Engand since the creator of "Childe Harold" woke up one morning, and found himself famous; but there have since been mornings there when other creators have woke up, and found themselves not undistinguished. It was not so difficult to startle the readers of English verse in the second decade of the century as in the seventh; for, whatever we may think of the poets of the former, it is certain they had not taken so strong a hold on their contemporaries as the poets of the latter, who had attained an excellence not before dreamed of, and who appeared to occupy every kingdom and province of song. The glory of Scott was the last red tints of a setting sun, and the glory of Wordsworth the first mild radiance of a rising moon, when Byron came like a comet, and paled their ineffectual fires. It was neither moonrise nor sunset when Swinburne came, but the full splendor of noontide,—the noontide of which the genius of Tennyson was

the golden light, and the genius of Browning the concourse of circumambient clouds. Between the fleeting shadow of these clouds and the girdling spaces of sunshine he stepped forth, — a slight figure in the garments of the Greek priesthood, - youthful but for the grave, far-off look in his eyes, and passionate but for the cold severity of his mien. Young priest of an old religion, he rekindled the fire upon its antique altar, and restored the worship of its imperious gods. Such was the coming of Swinburne with "Atalanta in Calydon." Regarded reverently at all times by the few poets who were scholars, the study of Greek poetry was productive of but little in England after Chapman finished his translation of Homer. Other translations of lesser Greek poets followed, and other translations of Homer, the chiefest being the heroic version of Pope, — which the great critic Bentley admitted to be a pretty poem, though it was not Homer, and the blank-verse rendering of Cowper, which was more faithful and less readable. The genius of Greek poetry was alien to the English mind until it revealed itself to the young imagination of Keats, who wore it in his heart of hearts, not because he was a scholar, - for a scholar he was not, - but because he was a Greek. There are a thousand faults in "Endymion," but the unpardonable fault of falsehood is not one of them. It is true, everywhere true to the spirit of Greek pastoral poetry, of which it was the first, and is the last, example in English song. How thoroughly the genius of Keats was possessed with the beautiful mythology of Greece, and how rapidly it matured his wonderful genius, which in writing "Endymion" outgrew the lush luxuriance of manner which is the worst defect of that poem, we see in his Odes "To Psyche," and "On a Grecian Urn," - exquisite productions in the purest style of art, - and in the fragment of "Hyperion," wherein magnificence of conception and severity of expression are alike conspicuous, and where, for the first time, the epical height of the Greeks is attained by an English poet. The secret of "Hyperion" and "Endymion" inhered in the temperament of Keats, who was a Greek, as one of his friends declared. The secret of "Atalanta in Calydon" was an outcome of the scholarship of Swinburne; for only a scholar, and a ripe one, - a Grecian as distinguished from

a Greek, -could have written that noble tragedy. It demanded more than the affluent sympathy of Keats: it demanded a fulness of knowledge which was denied him, - knowledge of the intention which was the inspiration of Greek tragedy, of the laws by which it was governed, and of the end to which it was directed, and which was to awaken by the simplest means emotions of pity and terror. If the inspiration of "Atalanta in Calydon" could have been drawn from any source other than the scholarship of Swinburne, I do not know where to look for it among the writings of his contemporaries or predecessors. He must have admired the Hellenics of Landor, who, like himself, was a Greek, though of a different type; but a profounder feeling than admiration for those noble productions, the spirit of which is idyllic rather than dramatic, was exercised in the shaping of his tragedy. He was charmed, no doubt, with Tennyson's "Ulvsses," the repose of which is suggestive of the descriptive passages in Greek tragedy, and also, no doubt, with Browning's "Artemis Prologuizes," the art of which is of a sterner cast; but neither could have discovered his genius for him, or directed him in the path he had chosen. He could not have been helped by Arnold's "Empedocles on Ætna," still less by his tragedy of "Merope."

What Marlowe's "Tamburlaine the Great" was in our dramatic literature, of which it was the first ripe flower, the first triumphant voice, — such was Swinburne's "Atalanta in Calydon." There was nothing like it in English verse before it appeared, and there has been nothing like it since. It was the first and last awakening of the tragic Muse of Greece, — a stern, magnificent, awful spirit, speaking the large language of the gods, and moving to her end like Fate. The qualities by which the blank verse of Marlowe is distinguished — the strength which impelled his contemporaries to call it a "mighty line," its daring use, not to say abuse, of language, and its wild, stormy music — are conspicuous in "Atalanta in Calydon." The originality of Swinburne's blank verse is as absolute as the originality of Marlowe's blank verse. It is an instrument upon which he was the first to play, and whose volume of sound no hand save his could evoke and control. One needs to be a poet in order to comprehend

the difficulties it overcomes, and the triumphs it achieves, - the art, in short, of which it is so magnificent an example. But one need not be a poet in order to feel its solemnity, its grandeur, its greatness, and the weight of the stern, dark thought with which it is charged. And one need not be a poet to feel that he never before encountered such an opulence of diction, such a wealth of words, such a largess of language, as Swinburne showers upon his song. And it is not merely language, of which there is a sufficiency in the poetry of the period, which is rather employed in the coining of phrases than of thoughts: it is the best, the strongest, the most poetic, with which the vocabulary of any modern poet was ever enriched. It is a royal treasure-house, the resources of which are incalculable and inexhaustible. Another quality to be noted in Swinburne, and one which allies him to the masters, is his sense of rhythm, - the music which is the inspiration and creation of metrical thought, and in which it lives, moves, and has its being. We find it in the great works of Shakespeare, and in his songs: in the early poems of Milton, — the songs in "Comus," and passages in "Paradise Lost;" and occasionally in Beaumont and Fletcher. We do not find it in Dryden and Pope, or, to come to our own time, in Scott or Byron. They knew nothing of the unheard melodies of which Keats tells us, but played, with their pipes or their trumpets, the old tunes which had been handed down to them, and from which such life as they may once have had had long since departed. It was otherwise with Swinburne, whose sense of music was profound, and who had, besides, an ear of his own which taught him, that, much as the masters had accomplished, they had not discovered all the secrets of English verse, particularly the great secret which underlies all great poetry, — the compulsion of discords into harmonies. The combinations of sound which run so strangely through Swinburne's poetry, and which cannot but end, one would think, in the harshest discords, become, in his hands, rivers of sonorous music, which rush and roar along their several ways until they reach the sea, and are swallowed up in its long, tumultuous, endless harmony.

When the history of English verse in the nineteenth century comes to be written, Swinburne will certainly figure in one chapter, and as

prominently as any of his contemporaries or predecessors. This chapter will be devoted to the poetic drama, which will be considered — which cannot fail to be considered — a sorry survival of the poetic drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It will contain the great names of Byron, and Coleridge, and Shelley, and Browning, and Tennyson, and the lesser names of Maturin, and Milman, and Knowles, and Talfourd, and Bulwer; but it will contain no great works, unless the historian of the future shall persuade himself that "Pippa Passes," and "Colombe's Birthday," and "A Blot on the 'Scutcheon' are such. There were great possibilities in Beddoes, who conceived dramatic situations as strong as those of Webster; but unfortunately they mastered him before he could master them, and so remained suggestions, — fragments, —

## "Like the red outline of beginning Adam."

There are two intellectual movements in this century, which are detrimental to, if they are not destructive of, the poetic drama. The first, the creative movement, which two centuries ago was exercised: in the poetic drama, is now exercised in the prose novel, the second, the poetic movement, which was then exercised in a general lyrical exaltation, is now exercised in the narrow province of personality. Men who, in the days of Shakespeare, would have written plays, in our day have written novels; and other men, who, in those days, would at least have tried to write plays, are content in ours to write productions which they hope will pass muster as plays on account of the pretty personal poetry with which they are so lavishly bestrewn! Two gifts are indispensable to the dramatic poet: one is the power of forgetting himself, the other the power of remembering his characters. But these gifts have not been bestowed upon the poets of our time, who are always remembering themselves, and always forgetting their characters, and consequently are not dramatic poets. Swinburne occupies a prominent place among the crowd of contributors to the poetic drama of the nineteenth century, and occupies it justly, as it seems to me. There is nothing in the whole range of the English drama with which his trilogy of plays of which Mary, Queen of Scots,

is the heroine, can be compared; and whether one likes it or not, it is certainly a remarkable work. It is remarkable for the skill with which he has delineated the character and passions of that strange woman, — siren of hearts, who clung to the hearts she broke, loving the love if not the lover; angel of light and darkness, and beautiful in both, — and it is remarkable for its length, which exceeds that of any dramatic work in the language, as the length of "The Ring and the Book" exceeds that of any narrative poem. It is an epical tragedy.

Every thing that Swinburne has written is stamped with his individuality, - a confident and wilful originality, which is at once the source of his strength and his weakness. He held it in check when he wrote "Atalanta in Calydon;" but when he wrote his "Poems and Ballads," it ran away with him, and he has never succeeded in mastering it since. He was poet enough and critic enough to know that "Poems and Ballads" would provoke censure. The world may be mistaken in many things, but it is not likely to be mistaken in so simple a thing as its own sense of morality. It knows - we all know - that we are not living in a state of nature. We have outlived its liberty. its wild will, its strong instincts, - the license of its thoughts and manners. We outlived all those before the first poet sang, and we will not let the last poet recall them. There is no poetry in them, there is not art in them: they are bad poetry, they are bad art, and, worse than all, they are hideously immoral. Some such feeling as this startled the countrymen of Swinburne in "Poems and Ballads." Purblind to many things, there is no limit to their vision when their eyes are once open. They saw nothing objectionable in the scene between Sebald and Ottima in "Pippa Passes," which they had been reading for twenty years; and nothing objectionable in "Chastelard," which they were then reading. But "Poems and Ballads" shocked them into one of those sudden spasms of virtuous indignation to which they are subject; and they straightway proceeded to magnify the poet's offences. They explained his veiled allusions, and dragged his hidden meanings to light. What an ordinary reader would not have understood, they compelled him to understand, committing in their criticism the very fault that Swinburne committed in his poetry.

What went to the genesis of these poems is a literary or personal secret which it will behoove the biographers of Swinburne to discover. He may have written them as so many dramatic studies, or he may have written them as so many expressions of himself. But for whatever purpose they may have been written, they did not and could not have come from a healthy mind: they are morbid, feverous, diseased,—sick unto death with the awful sickness of the soul. It was in his genius to write them, and live; but not to regain the health, the strength, the sanity, that were his when he wrote "Atalanta in Calydon."

It is the fortune, or the misfortune, of Swinburne, that he has not been criticised: he has been praised and abused, but criticised never. He was accepted at once, as he should have been; but he was not questioned, when he should have been questioned over and over. His intentions have not been examined, nor his methods scrutinized. He may be one of the masters of song, or he may be only one of its scholars: we have to judge for ourselves which he is. I have read, I believe, all that he has written, — with admiration for much, which I feel is very fine; with regret for more, which I know is very faulty, He has great poetic gifts, but he is not a great poet; for no man can be a great poet who is not a wise and solid thinker, and whose language is not large and direct.

I made a careful study of Swinburne's genius a year or two ago, taking for my text his only attempt at a narrative poem, "Tristram of Lyonesse;" and, as what I wrote then expresses what I think now, I shall repeat the substance of it here. I began by saying that it was a little curious, in view of the tendency of the modern English mind towards literary studies, that no one had yet made a study of his genius and his method of working, both of which were remarkable, and remarkably faulty. They were faulty, I said; for measured by the large methods of the great English poets, and the scope and style of their work, his work was exceedingly narrow, and his method merely a manner. He has published a dozen or more volumes of verse; but he has written no line that lingers in the memory, and has uttered nothing that resembles a thought. This could not have been the

case if he had been gifted with unusual mental endowments; for many a lesser poet has occasionally thought to some purpose, and has written verses that are remembered. One of his defects, perhaps his prime defect, is the brilliancy and force of his vocabulary. No poet ever excelled him in the profusion with which he throws off rich and picturesque and spirited words: he is a perfect master of epithets. His pages are luminous mists of language, the exact meaning of which, and their bearing upon the matter in hand, it is generally difficult to discover, they are so bravely put forth, and with such sonorous pomps of sound. For his music is never less, but often more, than his sense. He is a wonderful musician, if nothing else. He appears to have a great command of words; but when one looks into his manner carefully, one is struck with the really small number at his command, or, to state it more critically, with the rapidity with which the same words are perpetually turning up, and the little they really signify. The effects of brightness, for example, are indicated five times in the first nine lines of "Tristram of Lyonesse," and are scattered bewilderingly throughout the whole poem. Every thing is suggestive of imagery; but when one attempts to grasp the imagery it proves a fata morgana, which disappears, flitting from page to page and resting nowhere. He abounds with allusions to the great objects of nature, the sky and the sun, and day and night; but he never brings them before us as we are accustomed to see them, — for the simple reason, perhaps, that he has never seen them as they are, but as they seem to him through the haze of what he would call his imagination. The world as it flashes and glimmers in his lines is a very different world from the spot which men call earth; obeying other planetary conditions than that, and exhibiting a flora and fauna of startling novelty. The qualities I mentioned were as evident, I said, in Swinburne's early work as in his latest, though they were not so abundant there, nor of such permanent significance. There was a time when he might have overcome them, or at least have put them under the restraint of his critical powers; but, unfortunately, that time is past, for what at first was a tentative manner has now become a determined vice, which mars all his intellectual efforts. It is due to him to say

vocabulary, which resembles nothing so much as the luxuriance of a tropical forest. The same defect marked the tentative career of Keats, while he was writing "Endymion," the sense of which often depends upon the good or bad luck of the poet in finding the necessary rhyme; but Keats outgrew this defect so rapidly, that, in little more than a year after the completion of "Endymion," he began "Hyperion." Swinburne wanders as aimlessly in "Tristram of Lyonesse" as if he had selected "Endymion" as a model, -a model that he has fallen short of, in that he nowhere reproduces that exquisite sense of poetic luxury, and that trembling sensitiveness to beauty, which are vital in all that Keats wrote, - even in the bits of doggerel which croon out brokenly in his careless letters. What he probably had before him in writing "Tristram of Lyonesse," or what he read before he sat down to write it, was "Lamia," the music of whose heroic lines, as varied and strengthened by occasional triplets and alexandrines, appears to have impressed him; but not powerfully, for he remembered it only at long intervals, and then merely as an effect which it might be well to try again, and in rapid succession. What Dryden and Keats intended and accomplished by these departures from the laws of the heroic couplet, he seems never to have perceived.

But enough of "Tristram of Lyonesse," which I have not reprinted, out of consideration for the readers of this volume, whose poetic patience I had no right to burden; and enough — more than enough — of criticism of Swinburne. What I set out to do was to select what was best in his poetry; and, as this seemed to lie in three directions, I followed them carefully, — first in the narrow province of Greek tragedy, next in the broad world of the English drama, and last in the enchanted region of romantic verse. If I have done what I sought to do, I have honored the genius of Algernon Charles Swinburne.

R. H. STODDARD.

THE CENTURY, NEW YORK, June 23, 1884.

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## ATALANTA IN CALYDON.

#### TO THE MEMORY

OF

## WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

I NOW DEDICATE, WITH EQUAL AFFECTION, REVERENCE, AND REGRET,

A POEM INSCRIBED TO HIM WHILE YET ALIVE IN WORDS WHICH ARE NOW RETAINED

BECAUSE THEY WERE LAID BEFORE HIM:

AND TO WHICH, RATHER THAN CANCEL THEM, I HAVE ADDED SUCH OTHERS AS WERE EVOKED BY THE NEWS OF HIS DEATH:

THAT THOUGH LOSING THE PLEASURE I MAY NOT LOSE THE HONOR OF INSCRIBING
IN FRONT OF MY WORK

THE HIGHEST OF CONTEMPORARY NAMES.

ώχεο όη Βορέηθεν απότροπος αλλά σε Νύμφαι ήγαγον ἀσπασίαν ήδύπνοοι καθ' ἄλα, πληρούσαι μέλιτος θεόθεν στόμα, μή τι Ποσειδών βλάψη, έν ώσιν έχων σην μελίγηρυν όπα, τοίος ἀοιδὸς ἔφυς : ἡμεῖς δ' ἔτι κλαίομεν, οἴ σου δευόμεθ' οίχομένου, καί σε ποθούμεν αεί, είπε δὲ Πιερίδων τις ἀναστρεφθεῖσα πρὸς ἄλλην. ήλθεν, ίδου, πάντων φίλτατος ήλθε βροτών, στέμματα δρεψάμενος νεοθηλέα χερσί γεραιαίς. καὶ πολιον δάφναις άμφεκάλυψε κάρα ήδυ τι Σικελικαίς έπὶ πηκτίσιν, ήδυ τι χόρδαις, ασόμενος πολλην γάρ μετέβαλλε λύραν, πολλάκι δ' ἐν βήσσαισι καθήμενον εὖρεν 'Απόλλι: άνθεσι δ' ἔστεψεν, τερπνά δ' ἔδωκε λέγειν, Πάνα τ' ἀείμνηστόν τε Πίτυν Κόρυθόν τε δύσεδ. . ην τ' έφίλησε θεὰν θνητὸς 'Αμαδρύαδα. πόντου δ' έν μεγάροισιν έκοίμισε Κυμοδάμειαν, τήν τ' 'Αγαμεμνονίαν παίδ' ἀπέδωκε πατρί, πρός δ' Ιερούς Δελφούς θεόπληκτου έπεμψευ 'Ορεστατειρόμενον στυγεραίς ένθα καὶ ένθα θεαίς,

ώχεο δή καὶ άνευθε φίλων καὶ άνευθεν ἀοιδής. δρεψόμενος μαλακής άνθεα Περσεφόνης. ώχεο · κούκ ἔτ' ἔσει, κούκ αὐ ποτέ σοι παρεδοῦμαι άζόμενος, χειρών χερσί θιγών όσίαις. νὺν δ' αὐ μνησάμενον γλυκύπικρος ὑπήλυθεν αἰδώς, ola τυχών οίου πρός σέθεν οloς έχω· ούποτε σοίς, γέρον, όμμα φίλοις φιλον όμμασι τέρψω, σης, γέρον, άψάμενος, φίλτατε, δεξιτερας η ψαφαρά κόνις, η ψαφαρός βιός έστι τὶ τούτων μείον έφημερίων; οὐ κόνις άλλὰ βίος. άλλα μοι ήδύτερός γε πέλεις πολύ των έτ' έόντων, έπλεο γάρ· σοὶ μὴν ταῦτα θανόντι φέρω, παύρα μεν, άλλ' άπὸ κῆρος ἐτήτυμα· μηδ' ἀποτρεφθής, πρός δὲ βαλών ἔτι νῦν ἥσυχον ὅμμα δέχου. οὐ γὰρ ἔχω, μέγα δή τι θέλων, σέθεν ἄξια δοῦναι θαπτομένου περ άπών ου γάρ ένεστιν έμοι. ούδε μελικρήτου παρέχειν γάνος εί γάρ ενείη καί σε χεροίν ψαύσαι καί σέ ποτ' αὐθις ίδείν. δάκρυσί τε σπονδαίς τε κάρα φίλον ἀμφιπολεύειν όφθαλμούς θ' ίεροὺς σοὺς ίερόν τε δέμας. είθ' ὄφελον· μάλα γὰρ τάδ' ἂν ἀμπαύσειε μερίμνης• νὺν δὲ πρόσωθεν ἄνευ σήματος οἰκτον ἄγω: ούδ' ἐπιτυμβίδιον θρηνώ μέλος, ἀλλ' ἀπαμυνθείς. άλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἔχων ἀμφιδακρυτὰ πάθη. άλλα σὰ χαῖρε θανών, καὶ ἔχων γέρας ἴσθι πρὸς ἀνδρῶν πρός τε θεῶν, ἐνέροις εἴ τις ἔπεστι θεός. χαίρε γέρον, φίλε χαίρε πατέρ, πολύ φέρτατ' ἀοιδών ών ίδομεν, πολύ δη φέρτατ' ἀεισομένων χαίρε, καὶ όλβον έχοις, οίόν γε θανόντες έχουσιν, ήσυχίαν έχθρας καὶ φιλότητος άτερ.

σήματος οίχομένου σοι μνήματ' ές ίστερον Εσται, σοί τε φιλή μνήμη μνήματος οίχομένου '

ον Χάριτες κλαίουσι θεαὶ, κλαίει δ' Αφροδίτη καλλιχόροις Μουσῶν τερψαμένη στεφάνοις

οὐ γὰμ ἄπαξ lερούς ποτε γὴρας ἔτριψεν ἀοιδούς· τήνδε τὸ σὸν φαίνει μνῆμα τόδ' ἀγλαΐαν.

ἡ φίλος ἡς μακάρεσσι βροτὸς, σοὶ ở εἴ τινι Νύμφαι
 δῶρα ποθεινὰ νέμειν, ὕστατα δῶρ', ἔδοσαν.

τὰς νῦν χάλκεος ὅπνος ἔβη καὶ ἀνήνεμος αἰών, καὶ συνθαπτομέναι μοῖραν ἔχουσι μίαν.

εὕδεις καὶ σὰ, καλὰν καὶ ἀγάκλυτον ἐν χθονὶ κοίλη ὕπνον ἐφικόμενος, σης ἀπόνοσφι πάτρας,

τηλε παρὰ ξανθοῦ Τυρσηνικὸν οἰδμα καθεύδεις νάματος, ἡ δ' ἔτι σὴ μαῖά σε γαῖα ποθεῖ,

άλλ' ἀπέχεις, καὶ πρόσθε φιλόπτολις ὧν περ ἀπεὶπας · εῦδε μάκαρ δ' ἡμὶν οὐδ' ἀμέγαρτος ἔσει.

βαιός ἐπιχθονίων γε χρόνος καὶ μοὶρα κρατήσει, τοὺς δέ ποτ' εὐφροσύνη τοὺς δέ ποτ' ἄλγος ἔχει·

πολλίακι δ' ἢ βλάπτει φάος ἢ σκότος ἀμφικαλύπτει μυρομένους, δάκνει δ' ὕπνος ἐγρηγορότας ·

οὐδ ἔθ' ὅτ' ἐν τύμβοισι κατέδραθεν ὅμμα θανόντω**ν** ἡ σκότος ἡ τι φάος δήξεται ἠελίου ·

οὐδ' ὄναρ ἐννύχιον καὶ ἐνύπνιον οὐδ' ὕπαρ ἔσται ἤ ποτε τερπομένοις ἤ ποτ' ὐδυρομένοις:

άλλ' ένα πάντες ἀεὶ θὰκον συνέχουσι καὶ ἐδραν ἀντὶ βροτής ἄβροτον, κάλλιμον ἄντι κακής.

# ATALANTA IN CALYDON.

#### THE PERSONS.

CHIEF HUNTSMAN. CHORUS. ALTHÆA.

MELEAGER. ŒNEUS. ATALANTA.

PLEXIPPUS. HERALD.

MESSENGER. SECOND MESSENGER

ϊστω δ' ὄστις οὐχ ὑπόπτερος φροντίσιν δαείς. τὰν ἀ παιδολύμας τάλαινα Θεστιάς μήσατο πυρδαή τινα πρόνοιαν, καταίθουσα παιδός δαφοινόν

δαλὸν ἥλικ' ἐπεὶ μολων σύμμετρόν τε διαὶ βίου μοιρόκοσι μοιρόκραντον ές δμαρ.

ÆSCH. Cho. 602-612.

#### THE ARGUMENT.

ALTHÆA, daughter of Thestius and Eurythemis, queen of Calydon, being with child of Meleager her first-born son, dreamed that she brought forth a brand burning. And, upon his birth, came the three Fates, and prophesied of him three things, namely these: that he should have great strength of his hands, and good fortune in this life, and that he should live no longer when the brand then in the fire were consumed; wherefore his mother plucked it forth, and kept it by her. And the child, being a man grown, sailed with Jason after the fleece of gold, and won himself great praise of all men living; and, when the tribes of the North and West made war upon Ætolia, he fought against their army, and scattered it. But Artemis, having at the first stirred up these tribes to war against their army, and scattered it. But Artemis, having at the first stirred up these tribes to war against their army, and scattered it. But Artemis, having at the first stirred up these tribes to war against Eneus king of Calydon, because he had offered sacrifice to all the gods saving her alone, but her he had forgotten to honor, was yet more wroth because of the destruction of this army, and sent upon the land of Calydon a wild boar which slew many and wasted all their increase, but him could none slay, and many went against him and perished. Then were all the chief men of Greece gathered together, and among them Atalanta daughter of Iasius the Arcadian, a virgin; for whose sake Artemis let slay the boar, seeing she favored the maiden greatly; and Meleager having despatched it gave the spoil thereof to Atalanta, as one beyond measure enamoured of her; but the brethren of Althæa his mother, Toxeus and Plexippus, with such others as misliked that she only should bear off the praise whereas many had borne the labor, laid wait for her to take away her spoil; but Meleager fought against them, and slew them: whom when Althæa their sister beheld, and knew to be slain of her son, she waxed for wrath and sorrow like as one mad, and, taking the brand whereby the like wise wasted away, that being brought back to his father's house he died in a brief space; in the fire were consumed; wherefore his mother plucked it forth, and kept it by her. And the child, his life likewise wasted away, that being brought back to his father's house he died in a brief space; and his mother also endured not long after for very sorrow; and this was his end, and the end of that hunting.

Chief Huntsman. Maiden, and mis- Being treble in thy divided deity, tress of the months and stars Now folded in the flowerless fields of

Goddess whom all gods love with threefold heart,

A light for dead men and dark hours, ā foot

Swift on the hills as morning, and a hand To all things fierce and fleet that roat and range

Mortal, with gentler shafts than snow or sleep;

Hear now and help and lift no violent hand.

But favorable and fair as thine eye's

Hidden and shown in heaven; for I all night

Amid the king's hounds and the hunting

Have wrought and worshipped toward thee; nor shall man

See goodlier hounds or deadlier edge of spears;

But for the end, that lies unreached at yet Between the hands and on the knees of

O fair-faced sun killing the stars and

And dreams and desolation of the night! Rise up, shine, stretch thine hand out, with thy bow

Touch the most dimmest height of trembling heaven,

And burn and break the dark about thy

Shot through and through with arrows; let thine hair

Lighten as flame above that flameless

Which was the moon, and thine eyes fill the world

And thy lips kindle with swift beams; let earth

Laugh, and the long sea fiery from thy feet Through all the roar and ripple of

streaming springs And foam in reddening flakes and flying

flowers Shaken from hands and blown from lips

of nymphs Whose hair or breast divides the wan-

dering wave With salt close tresses cleaving lock to

lock, All gold, or shuddering and unfurrowed snow:

And all the winds about thee with their wings,

And fountain-heads of all the watered

Each horn of Achelous, and the green

Euenus, wedded with the straitening For in fair time thou comest; come also

thou, Twin-born with him, and virgin, Arte-

And give our spears their spoil, the wild boar's hide.

Sent in thine anger against us for sin done And bloodless altars without wine or

fire. Him now consume thou; for thy sacri-

fice With sanguine-shining steam divides the dawn.

And one, the maiden rose of all thy maids,

Arcadian Atalanta, snowy-souled,

Fair as the snow and footed as the wind, From Ladon and well-wooded Mænalus Over the firm hills and the fleeting sea Hast thou drawn hither, and many an

armèd king,

Heroes, the crown of men, like gods in fight.

Moreover out of all the Ætolian land, From the full-flowered Lelantian pasturage To what of fruitful field the son of

Won from the roaring river and labor-

ing sea When the wild god shrank in his horn and fled

And foamed and lessened through his wrathful fords.

Leaving clear lands that steamed with sudden sun,

These virgins with the lightening of the day

Bring thee fresh wreaths and their own sweeter hair,

Luxurious locks and flower-like mixed with flowers,

Clean offering, and chaste hymns; but

me the time Divides from these things; whom do thou not less

Help and give honor, and to mine hounds good speed,

And edge to spears, and luck to each man's hand.

Chorus. When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,

The mother of months in meadow or plain

Fills the shadows and windy places

With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;

And the brown bright nightingale am-

Is half assuaged for Itylus,

For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,

The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,

Maiden most perfect, lady of light, With a noise of winds and many riv-

With a clamor of waters, and with

might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet.

Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;

For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,

Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,

Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?

O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,

Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!

For the stars and the winds are unto her

As raiment, as songs of the harp-

player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling

to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over, And all the season of snows and sins;

The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that
wins:

And time remembered is grief forgotten,

And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,

And in green underwood and cover

Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,

Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,

The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes

From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;

And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,

And the oat is heard above the lyre, And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes

The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,

Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid, Follows with dancing and fills with delight

The Mænad and the Bassarid;

And soft as lips that laugh and hide

The laughing leaves of the trees divide,

And screen from seeing and leave in

sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;

The wild vine slipping down leaves bare Her bright breast shortening irto

Her bright breast shortening irto sighs;

The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,

But the berried ivy catches and cleaves To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare

The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

Althaa. What do ye singing? what is this ye sing?

Chorus. Flowers bring we, and pure lips that please the gods,

And raiment meet for service: lest the day

Turn sharp with all its honey in our lips.

Althaa. Night, a black hound, follows the white fawn day,

Swifter than dreams the white flown feet of sleep;

Will ye pray back the night with any prayers?

And though the spring put back a little while

Winter, and snows that plague all men for sin,

And the iron time of cursing, yet I

Spring shall be ruined with the rain, and storm

Eat up like fire the ashen autumn days.

days.

I marvel what men do with prayers

awake
Who dream and die with dreaming;
any god,

Yea the least god of all things called divine,

Is more than sleep and waking; yet we say,

Perchance by praying a man shall match his god.

For if sleep have no mercy, and man's dreams

Bite to the blood and burn into the bone,

What shall this man do waking? By the gods,

He shall not pray to dream sweet

things to-night,
Having dreamt once more bitter things

than death.

Chorus. Queen, but what is it that

hath burnt thine heart?

For thy speech flickers like a blown-out flame.

Althæa. Look, ye say well, and know

not what ye say; For all my sleep is turned into a fire,

And all my dreams to stuff that kindles it.

Chorus. Yet one doth well being patient of the gods.

Althaa. Yea, lest they smite us with some four-foot plague.

Chorus. But when time spreads find out some herb for it.

Althaa. And with their healing herbs infect our blood.

Chorus. What ails thee to be jealous of their ways?

Althæa. What if they give us poisonous drinks for wine?

Chorus. They have their will; much talking mends it not.

Althaa. And gall for milk, and cursing for a prayer?

Chorus. Have they not given life, and the end of life?

Althora. Lo, where they heal, they help not; thus they do,

They mock us with a little piteousness,

And we say prayers, and weep; but at the last,

Sparing a while, they smite and spare no whit.

Chorus. Small praise man gets dis praising the high gods:

What have they done that thou dis honorest them?

Althaa. First Artemis for all this harried land

I praise not, and for wasting of the boar That mars with tooth and tusk and fiery feet

Green pasturage and the grace of standing corn

And meadow and marsh with springs and unblown leaves,

Flocks and swift herds and all that bite sweet grass,

I praise her not; what things are these to praise?

Chorus. But when the king did sacrifice, and gave

Each god fair dues of wheat and blood and wine,

Her not with bloodshed nor burnt-offering

Revered he, nor with salt or cloven cake;

Wherefore being wroth she plagued the land; but now

Takes off from us fate and her heavy things.

Which deed of these twain were not good to praise?

For a just deed looks always either way With blameless eyes, and mercy is no fault.

Althæa. Yea, but a curse she hath sent above all these

Γο hurt us where she healed us; and

Fire where the old fire went out, and where the wind

Slackened, hath blown on us with deadlier air.

Chorus. What storm is this that tightens all our sail?

Althaa. Love, a thwart sea-wind full of rain and foam.

Chorus. Whence blown, and born under what stormier star?

Althea. Southward across Euenus from the sea.

Chorus. Thy speech turns toward Arcadia like blown wind.

Althaa. Sharp as the north sets when the snows are out.

Chorus. Nay, for this maiden hath no touch of love.

Althæa. I would she had sought in some cold gulf of sea

Love, or in dens where strange beasts lurk, or fire,

Or snows on the extreme hills, or iron land

Where no spring is; I would she had sought therein And found, or ever love had found her

here.

Chorus. She is holier than all holy days or things,

The sprinkled water or fume of perfect

fire;
Chaste dedicated to nure prayers and

Chaste, dedicated to pure prayers, and filled
With higher thoughts than heaven; a

maiden clean, Pure iron, fashioned for a sword; and

She loves not; what should one such

do with love?

Althæa. Look you, I speak not as one

light of wit,
But as a queen speaks, being heartvexed; for oft

I hear my brothers wrangling in mid hall,

And am not moved; and my son chicking them,

And these things nowise move me, but I know

Foolish and wise men must be to the end,

And feed myself with patience; but this most,

This moves me, that for wise men as for fools

Love is one thing, an evil thing, and turns

Choice words and wisdom into fire and air.

And in the end shall no joy come, but grief,

Sharp words and soul's division and fresh tears

Flower-wise upon the old root of tears brought forth,

Fruit-wise upon the old flower of tears sprung up,

Pitiful sighs, and much regrafted pain. These things are in my presage, and myself

Am part of them and know not; but in dreams

The gods are heavy on me, and all the fates

Shed fire across my eyelids mixed with night,

And burn me blind, and disilluminate My sense of seeing, and my perspicuous soul

Darken with vision; seeing I see not, hear

And hearing am not holpen, but mine eyes

Stain many tender broideries in the bed Drawn up about my face that I may weep

And the king wake not; and my brows and lips

Tremble and sob in sleeping, like swift flames

That tremble, or water when it sobs with heat

Kindled from under; and my tears fill

my breast
And speck the fair dyed pillows round

the king
With barren showers and salter than
the sea.

Such dreams divide me dreaming; for long since I dreamed that out of this my womb

had sprung

Fire and a firebrand; this was ere my

Meleager, a goodly flower in fields of

Felt the light touch him coming forth, and wailed

Childlike; but yet he was not; and in

I bare him, and my heart was great; for yet

So royally was never strong man born, Nor queen so nobly bore as noble a thing

As this my son was: such a birth God sent

And such a grace to bear it. Then came in

Three weaving women, and span each

a thread, Saying This for strength and That for luck, and one

Saying Till the brand upon the hearth burn down,

So long shall this man see good days

and live. And I with gathered raiment from the

Sprang, and drew forth the brand, and cast on it

Water, and trod the flame bare-foot, and crushed

With naked hand spark beaten out of

And blew against and quenched it; for

These are the most high Fates that dwell with us.

I said.

And we find favor a little in their sight, A little, and more we miss of, and much

Foils us; howbeit they have pitied me,

And thee most piteous, thee a tenderer thing

Than any flower of fleshly seed alive. Wherefore I kissed and hid him with

my hands, And covered under arms and hair, and

wept,

And feared to touch him with my tears and laughed;

So light a thing was this man, grown so great

Men cast their heads back, seeing against the sun

Blaze the armed man carven on his shield, and hear

The laughter of little bells along the brace Ring, as birds singing or flutes blown,

and watch,

High up, the cloven shadow of either plume

Divide the bright light of the brass, and make His helmet as a windy and wintering

Seen through blown cloud and plume-

like drift, when ships Drive, and men strive with all the sea,

and oars Break, and the beaks dip under, drink-

ing death; Yet was he then but a span long, and

moaned With inarticulate mouth inseparate

words, And with blind lips and fingers wrung my breast

Hard, and thrust out with foolish hands and feet.

Murmuring, but those gray women with bound hair

Who fright the gods frighted not him; he laughed Seeing them, and pushed out hands to

feel and haul Distaff and thread, intangible; but

they Passed, and I hid the brand, and in my

Laughed likewise, having all my will of heaven.

But now I know not if to left or right The gods have drawn us hither; for again

I dreamt, and saw the black brand burst on fire

As a branch bursts in flower, and saw the flame

Fade flower-wise, and Death came and with dry lips

Blew the charred ash into my breast; and Love

Trampled the ember and crushed it with swift feet.

This I have also at heart; that not for me,

Not for me only or son of mine, I girls, The gods have wrought life, and desire of life.

Heart's love and heart's division; but for all

There shines one sun and one wind blows till night.

And when night comes the wind sinks and the sun,

And there is no light after, and no storm,

But sleep and much forgetfulness of things.

In such wise I gat knowledge of the gods Years hence, and heard high sayings of one most wise,

Eurythemis my mother, who beheld With eyes alive and spake with lips of these

As one on earth disfleshed and disallied From breath or blood corruptible; such gifts

Time gave her, and an equal soul to these

And equal face to all things; thus she said.

But whatsoever intolerable or glad
The swift hours weave and unweave, I
go hence

Full of mine own soul, perfect of myself, Toward mine and me sufficient; and

what chance The gods cast lots for and shake out

That shall we take, and that much bear withal.

And now, before these gather to the hunt,

I will go arm my son and bring him forth,

Lest love or some man's anger work him harm.

Chorus. Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;

Grief, with a glass that ran;

Pleasure, with pain for leaven; Summer, with flowers that fell;

Remembrance fallen from heaven,
And madness risen from hell;

Strength without hands to smite; Love that endures for a breath; Night the shadow of light

Night, the shadow of light, And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand Fire, and the falling of tears, And a measure of sliding sand From under the feet of the years;

And froth and drift of the sea;
And dust of the laboring earth;

And bodies of things to be

In the houses of death and of birth; And wrought with weeping and laughter,

And fashioned with loathing and love, With life before and after And death beneath and above,

For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a

With travail and heavy sorrow, The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south

They gathered as unto strife; They breathed upon his mouth, They filled his body with life; Evesight and speech they wrough

Eyesight and speech they wrought For the veils of the soul therein, A time for labour and thought,

A time to serve and to sin; They gave him light in his ways, And love, and a space for delight,

And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire;

With his lips he travaileth; In his heart is a blind desire,

In his eyes foreknowledge of death; He weaves, and is clothed with derision;

Sows, and he shall not reap; His life is a watch or a vision

Between a sleep and a sleep.

Meleager. O sweet new heaven and air without a star,

Fair day, be fair and welcome, as to men

With deeds to do and praise to pluck from thee.

Come forth a child, born with clear

sound and light,

With laughter and swift limbs and prosperous looks;

That this great hunt with heroes for the hounds

May leave thee memorable and us well

Althæa. Son, first I praise thy prayer, then bid thee speed;

But the gods hear men's hands before their lips,

And heed beyond all crying and sacrifice

Light of things done and noise of laboring men.

But thou, being armed and perfect for the deed,

Abide; for like rain-flakes in a wind they grow,

The men thy fellows, and the choice of the world,

Bound to root out the tusked plague, and leave

Thanks and safe days and peace in Calydon.

Meleager. For the whole city and all the low-lying land

Flames, and the soft air sounds with them that come;

The gods give all these fruit of all their works.

Althæa. Set thine eye thither and fix

thy spirit and say
Whom there thou knowest; for sharp

mixed shadow and wind Blown up between the morning and

the mist, With steam of steeds and flash of bridle or wheel,

And fire, and parcels of the broken dawn, And dust divided by hard light, and spears

That shine and shift as the edge of wild beasts' eyes,

Smite upon mine; so fiery their blind edge

Burns, and bright points break up and baffle day.

Meleager. The first, for many I know not, being far off,

Peleus the Larissæan, couched with whom

Sleeps the white sea-bred wife and silver-shod,

Fair as fled foam, a goddess; and their

Most swift and splendid of men's children born,

Most like a god, full of the future fame.

Althæa. Who are these shining like one sundered star?

Meleager. Thy sister's sons, a double

flower of men.

Althaa. O sweetest kin to me in all

the world,

O twin-born blood of Leda, gracious

heads Like kindled lights in untempestuous

heaven, Fair flower-like stars on the iron foam

of fight, With what glad heart and kindliness of

soul,
Even to the staining of both eyes with
tears

And kindling of warm eyelids with desire,

A great way off I greet you, and rejoice

Seeing you so fair, and moulded like as gods.

Far off ye come, and least in years of

these,
But lordliest, but worth love to look

upon.

Meleager. Even such (for sailing hither I saw far hence,

And where Eurotas hollows his moist rock

Nigh Sparta with a strenuous-hearted stream)

Even such I saw their sisters; one swan-white,

The little Helen, and less fair than she Fair Clytæmnestra, grave as pasturing fawns

Who feed and fear some arrow; but at whiles,

As one smitten with love or wrung with joy,

She laughs and lightens with her eyes and then

Weeps; whereat Helen, having laughed, reeps too,

And the other chides her, and she being chid speaks nought,

But cleeks and lips and eyelids kisses her,

Lauging; so fare they, as in their bloomless bud

Andfull of unblown life, the blood of gods.

Alihaa. Sweet days befall them and good loves and lords,

And tender and temperate honors of the hearth,

Peace, and a perfect life and blameless bed.

But who shows next an eagle wrought in gold,

That flames and beats broad wings against the sun

And with void mouth gapes after emptier prey?

Meleager. Know by that sign the reign of Telamon

Between the fierce mouths of the encountering brine

On the strait reefs of twice-washed Salamis.

Althaa. For like one great of hand he bears himself,

Vine-chapleted, with savors of the sea, Glittering as wine and moving as a wave.

But who girt round there roughly follows him?

Meleager. Ancæus, great of hand, an iron bulk,

Two-edged for fight as the axe against his arm,
Who drives against the surge of stormy

spears

Full-sailed; him Cepheus follows, his twin-born,
Chief name next his of all Arcadian men.

Althæa. Praise be with men abroad; chaste lives with us,

Home-keeping days and household reverences.

Meleager. Next by the left unsan-

The sail and oar of this Ætolian land, Thy brethren, Toxeus and the violentsouled Plexippus, over-swift with hand and tongue;

For hands are fruitful, but the ignorant mouth

Blows and corrupts their work with barren breath.

Althæa. Speech too bears fruit, being worthy; and air blows down

Things poisonous, and high-seated violences,

And with charmed words and songs

And with charmed words and songs have men put out

Wild evil, and the fire of tyrannies.

Meleager. Yea, all things have they, save the gods and love.

Althaa. Love thou the law and cleave

to things ordained.

Meleager. Law lives upon their lips whom these applaud.

Althaa. How sayest thou these? what god applauds new things?

Meleager. Zeus, who hath fear and custom under foot.

Althea. But loves not laws thrown down and lives awry.

Meleager. Yet is not less himself than his own law.

Althea. Nor shifts and shuffles old things up and down. Meleager. But what he will remoulds

and discreates.

Althea. Much, but not this, that each

thing live its life.

Meleager. Nor only live, but lighten.

and lift up higher.

Althea. Pride breaks itself, and too

much gained is gone.

Meleager. Things gained are gone,
but great things done endure.

Althaa. Child, if a man serve law through all his life

And with his whole heart worship, him all gods

Praise; but who loves it only with his lips,

And not in heart and deed desiring

Hides a perverse will with obsequious words;

Him heaven infatuates and his twinborn fate

Tracks, and gains on him, scenting sins far off,

And the swift hounds of violent death devour.

Be man at one with equal-minded gods, So shall he prosper; not through laws torn up,

Violated rule and a new face of things. A woman armed makes war upon herself.

Unwomanlike, and treads down use and wont

And the sweet common honor that she hath,

Love, and the cry of children, and the hand

Trothplight and mutual mouth of marriages.

This doth she, being unloved; whom if one love.

Not fire nor iron and the wide-mouthed

Are deadlier than her lips or braided

For of the one comes poison, and a

Falls from the other and burns the lives of men.

But thou, son, be not filled with evil dreams,

Nor with desire of these things; for with time

Blind love burns out; but if one feed it fuil

Till some discoloring stain dyes all his life,

He shall keep nothing praiseworthy, nor die

The sweet wise death of old men honorable,

Who have lived out all the length of all their years
Blameless, and seen well-pleased the

face of gods,

And without shame and without fear

have wrought Things memorable, and while their days

held out
In sight of all men and the sun's great

Have gat them glory and given of their own praise

To the earth that bare them and the day that bred,

Home friends and far-off hospitalities,

And filled with gracious and mmorial fame

Lands loved of summer or wasled by violent seas.

Towns populous and many unpoted ways,

And alien lips and native with their own.

But when white age and venerable death

Mow down the strength and life within their limbs,

Drain out the blood and darker their clear eyes,

Immortal honor is on them, having

Through splendid life and death desirable

To the clear seat and remote throne of souls,

Lands indiscoverable in the unheardof west,

Round which the strong stream of a sacred sea

Rolls without wind forever, and the snow

There shows not her white wings and windy feet,

Nor thunder nor swift rain saith any thing,

Nor the sun burns, but all things rest and thrive; And these, filled full of days, divine and

dead, Sages and singers fiery from the god,

And such as loved their land and all things good

And, best beloved of best men, liberty, Free lives and lips, free hands of men free-born,

And whatsoever on earth was honora-

And whosoever of all the ephemeral seed.

Live there a life no liker to the gods

But nearer than their life of terrene days.

Love thou such life, and look for such a death.

But from the light and fiery dreams of love

Spring heavy sorrows and a sleepless life,

Visions not dreams, whose lids no charm shall close,

Nor song assuage them waking; and swift death

Crushes with sterile feet the unripening

Treads out the timeless vintage; whom do thou

Eschewing embrace the luck of this thy life,

Not without honor; and it shall bear to thee

Such fruit as men reap from spent hours and wear,

Few men, but happy; of whom be thou,
O son,

Happiest, if thou submit thy soul to fate,

And set thine eyes and heart on hopes high-born

And divine deeds and abstinence divine. So shalt thou be toward all men all thy days

As light and might communicable, and

From heaven among the stars above the hours,

And break not as a man breaks nor burn down:

For to whom other of all heroic names Have the gods given his life in hand as thine?

And gloriously hast thou lived, and made thy life

To me that bare thee and to all men born

Thankworthy, a praise forever; and hast won fame When wild wars broke all round thy

father's house, And the mad people of windy mountain

Laid spears against us like a sea, and all

Ætolia thundered with Thessalian hoofs;

Yet these, as wind baffles the foam, and beats

Straight back the relaxed ripple, didst thou break

And loosen all their lances, till undone And man from man they fell; for ye twain stood God against god, Ares and Artemis,

And thou the mightier, wherefore she unleashed

A sharp-toothed curse thou too shalt overcome;

For in the greener blossom of thy life Ere the full blade caught flower, and when time gave

Respite, thou didst not slacken soul nor sleep,

But with great hand and heart seek praise of men

Out of sharp straits and many a grievous thing,

Seeing the strange foam of undivided seas

On channels never sailed in, and by shores

Where the old winds cease not blowing, and all the night

Thunders, and day is no delight to men. Chorus. Meleager, a noble wisdom

and fair words

The gods have given this woman: hear thou these.

Meleager. O mother, I am not fain to strive in speech

Nor set my mouth against thee, who art wise

Even as they say, and full of sacred words.
But one thing I know surely, and cleave

to this;
That though I be not subtle of wit as

thou Nor womanlike to weave sweet words,

and melt Mutable minds of wise men as with

I too, doing justly and reverencing the gods,

Shall not want wit to see what things be right.

For whom they love and whom reject, being gods,

There is no man but seeth, and in good

Submits himself, refraining all his heart. And I too, as thou sayest, have seen

great things; Seen otherwhere, but chiefly when the First caught between stretched ropes the roaring west,

And all our oars smote eastward, and the wind

First flung round faces of seafaring men White splendid snow-flakes of the sundering foam,

And the first furrow in virginal green sea

Followed the plunging ploughshare of hewn pine,

And closed, as when deep sleep subdues man's breath

Lips close and heart subsides; and closing, shone

Sunlike with many a Nereid's hair, and moved

Round many a trembling mouth of doubtful gods,

Risen out of sunless and sonorous gulfs
Through waning water and into shallow

That watched us; and when flying the dove was snared

As with men's hands, but we shot after and sped

Clear through the irremeable Symplegades;

And chiefliest when hoar beach and herbless cliff

Stood out ahead from Colchis, and we heard

Clefts hoarse with wind, and saw through narrowing reefs

The lightning of the intolerable wave Flash, and the white wet flame of breakers burn

Far under a kindling south-wind, as a

Burns and bends all its blowing flame one way;

Wild heights untravelled of the wind, and vales

Cloven seaward by their violent streams, and white

With bitter flowers and bright salt scurf of brine;

Heard sweep their sharp swift gales, and bowing birdwise

Shriek with birds' voices, and with furious feet

Tread loose the long skirts of a storm; and saw

The whole white Euxine clash no together and fall

Full-mouthed, and thunderouse from a thousand throats

Yet we drew thither, and won 'no the fleece.

Medea, deadlier than the ht sea; but there

Seeing many a wonder, ar nd d fearfu things to men,
I saw not one thing like this wi one see

here,
Most fair and fearful, feminine, the a god,

Faultless; whom I that love not, unlike,

Fear, and give honor, and choose from all the gods.

Eneus. Lady, the daughter of Thestius, and thou, son,

Not ignorant of your strife nor light of wit,

Scared with vain dreams and fluttering like spent fire,

I come to judge between you, but a

Full of past days and wise from years endured.

Nor thee I praise, who art fain to undo

things done:
Nor thee, who art swift to esteem them

overmuch.
For what the hours have given is given,

and this Changeless; howbeit these change, and

in good time Devise new things and good, not one

thing still.
Us have they sent now, at our need for

help, Among men armed a woman, foreign

born, Virgin, not like the natural flower of

things That grows and bears, and brings forth

fruit, and dies;

Unlovable, no light for a husband's house,

Espoused; a glory among unwedded girls,

And chosen of gods who reverence maidenhood.

These too we honor in honoring her but thou,

Abstain thy feet from following, and thine eyes

From amorous touch; nor set toward hers thine heart.

Son, lest hate bear no deadlier fruit than love. Althaa. O king, thou art wise, but

wisdom halts; and just, But the gods love not justice more than

And smite the righteous and the violent

And mix with insolent blood the reverent man's.

And bruise the holier as the lying lips. Enough; for wise words fail me, and m'y heart

Takes fire and trembles flamewise, O my son,

child, for thine head's sake; mine

eves wax thick, To rning toward thee, so goodly a weaponed man,

o glorious; and for love of thine own

They are darkened, and tears burn them, fierce as fire,

And my lips pause and my soul sinks with love.

But by thine hand, by thy sweet life and eyes,

By thy great heart and these clasped knees, O son,

I pray thee that thou slay me not with thee. For there was never a mother woman-

born Loved her sons better; and never a queen of men

More perfect in her heart toward whom she loved.

For what lies light on many and they

forget, Small things and transitory as a wind

o' the sea, I forget never; I have seen thee all thine years

A man in arms, strong and a joy to

Seeing thine head glitter and thine hand burn its way

Through a heavy and iron furrow of sundering spears;

But always also a flower of three suns

The small one thing that lying drew down my life

To lie with thee and feed thee; a child and weak.

Mine, a delight to no man, sweet to

Who then sought to thee? who gat help? who knew

If thou wert goodly? nay, no man at

Or what sea saw thee, or sounded with thine oar,

Child? or what strange land shone with war through thee?

But fair for me thou wert, O little life, Fruitless, the fruit of mine own flesh, and blind,

More than much gold, ungrown, a foolish flower.

For silver nor bright snow nor feather of foam

Was whiter, and no gold yellower than thine hair,

O child, my child; and now thou art lordlier grown,

Not lovelier, nor a new thing in mine I charge thee by thy soul and this my

breast, Fear thou the gods and me and thine

own heart, Lest all these turn against thee; for who knows

What wind upon what wave of altering time

Shall speak a storm and blow calamity? And there is nothing stabile in the world

But the gods break it; yet not less, fair

If but one thing be stronger, if one en-

dure,

Surely the bitter and the rooted love That burns between us, going from me to thee.

Shall more endure than all things. What dost thou,

Following strange loves? why wilt thou kill mine heart?

Lo, I talk wild and windy words, and fall

From my clear wits, and seem of mine own self

Lethroned, dispraised, dis-seated; and

That was my crown, breaks, and mine heart is gone,

And I am naked of my soul, and stand Ashamed, as a mean woman; take thou thought:

Live if thou wilt, and if thou wilt not, look.

The gods have given thee lite to lose or keep, Thou shalt not die as men die, but

thine end Fallen upon thee shall break me un-

Meleager. Queen, my whole heart is

molten with thy tears, And my limbs yearn with pity of thee,

and love Compels with grief mine eyes and laboring breath:

For what thou art I know thee, and this thy breast

And thy fair eyes I worship, and am

Toward thee in spirit and love thee in all my soul.

For there is nothing terribler to men Than the sweet face of mothers, and

the might.

But what shall be, let be; for us the day Once only lives a little, and is not found. Time and the fruitful hour are more than we.

And these lay hold upon us; but thou, God,

Zeus, the sole steersman of the helm of

Father, be swift to see us, and as thou

Help: or if adverse, as thou wilt.

Chorus. We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair; thou art goodly, O

Thy wings make light in the air as the wings of a dove.

Thy feet are as winds that divide the stream of the sea;

Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the garment of thee.

Thou art swift and subtle and blind a flame of fre;

Before thee the laughter, behind thee. the tears of desire;

And twain go forth beside thee, a mae with a maid;

Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whordelight makes afraid;

As the breath in the buds that stir i... her bridal breath:

But Fate is the name of her; and his name is Death.

For an evil blossom was born Of sea-foam and the frothing of blood, Blood-red and bitter of fruit,

And the seed of it laug, hter and

And the leaves of it madness and scorn: A bitter flower from the bud, Sprung of the sea without root

> Sprung without graft from t years.

The weft of the world was untern That is woven of the day on the

The hair of the hours was not white

Nor the raiment of time overworn, When a wonder, a world's delight, A perilous goddess was born;

And the waves of the sea as she came Clove, and the foam at her feet,

Fawning, rejoiced to bring forth A fleshly blossom, a flame Filling the heavens with heat

To the cold white ends of the north.

And in air the clamorous birds, And men upon earth that hear

Sweet art curate words Sweetly divided apart,

And in shallow and channel and mere The rapid and footless herds,

Rejoiced, being foolish of heart.

For all they said upon earth, She is fair, she is white like a dove. And the life of the world in her breath

Breathes, and is born at her birth, For they knew thee for mother of love, And knew thee not mother of death.

Mat hadst thou to do being born,
Mother, when winds were at ease,
As a flower of the springtime of corn,
A flower of the foam of the seas?

To bitter thou wast from thy birth,
Aphrodite, a mother of strife;
To before thee some rest was on earth,
A little respite from tears,

A little pleasure of life; or life was not then as thou art, But as one that waxeth in years

Sweet-spoken, a fruitful wife; Earth had no thorn, and desire No sting, neither death any dart; What hadst thou to do amongst these.

Thou, clothed with a burning fire, Thou, girt with sorrow of heart, Thou, sprung of the seed of the

As an ear from a seed of corn,
As a brand plucked forth of a pyre,
as a ray shed forth of the morn,
For division of soul and disease,
or a dart and a sting and a thorn?
What ailed thee then to be born?

Was there not evil enough,"
Mother, and anguish on earth
Born with a man at his birth,
Wastes underfoot, and above
Storm out of heaven, and dearth
Shaken down from the shining thereof,
Wrecks from afar overseas
And peril of shallow and firth,
And tears that spring and increase
In the barren places of mirth,
That thou, having wings as a dove,
Being girt with desire for a girth,
That thou must come after these,

Thou shouldst not so have been born:
But death should have risen with
thee,

That thou must lay on him love?

Mother, and visible fear,
Grief, and the wringing of hands,
And noise of many that mourn;
The smitten bosom, the knee
Bowed, and in each man's ear
A cry as of perishing lands,
A moan as of people in prison,
A tumult of infinite griefs;

And thunder of storm on the sands,

And wailing of wives on the shore; And under thee newly arisen

Loud shoals and shipwrecking reefs, Fierce air and violent light; Sail rent and sundering oar,

Darkness, and noises of night; Clashing of streams in the sea,

Wave against wave as a sword,
Clamor of currents, and foam;
Rains making ruin on earth,
Winds that way rayenous and roam

Winds that wax ravenous and roam As wolves in a wolfish horde; Fruits growing faint in the tree,

And blind things dead in their birth:

Famine, and blighting of corn, When thy time was come to be born.

All these we know of; but thee Who shall discern or declare? In the uttermost ends of the sea The light of thine eyelids and hair,

The light of thy bosom as fire
Between the wheel of the sun
And the flying flames of the air?
Wilt thou turn thee not yet not
have pity,

But abide with despair and desire
And the crying of armies undone,
Lamentation of one with another

And breaking of city by city;
The dividing of friend against friend,
The severing of brother and

brother.;
Wilt thou utterly bring to an end?
Have mercy, mother!

For against all men from of old
Thou hast set thine hand as a curse,
And cast out gods from their places
These things are spoken of thee.

Strong kings and goodly with gold
Thou hast found out arrows to pierce,
And made their kingdoms and races
As dust and surf of the sea.

All these, overburdened with woes

And with length of their days waxen
weak.

Thou slewest; and sentest more over

Upon Tyro an evil thing, Rent hair and a fetter and blows

Making bloody the flower of the cheek,

Though she lay by a god as a lover,

Though fair, and the seed of a king.

For of old, being full of thy fire, She endured not longer to wear

On her bosom a saffron vest,

On her shoulder an ashwood quiver;

Being mixed and made one through desire

With Enipeus, and all her hair

Made moist with his mouth, and her breast

Filled full of the foam of the river.

Atalanta. Sun, and clear light among green hills, and day

Late risen and long sought after, and you just gods

Whose hands divide anguish and recompense,

But first the sun's white sister, a maid in heaven,

On earth of all maids worshipped—hail, and hear,

And witness with me if not without sign sent.

Not without rule and reverence, I a maid

Hallowed, and huntress holy as whom I serve,

Here in your sight and eyeshot of these

Stand, girt as they toward hunting, and my shafts

Drawn; wherefore all ye stand up on my side,

If I be pure and all ye righteous gods, Lest one revile me, a woman, yet no wife,

That bear a spear for spindle, and this bow strung

For a web woven; and with pure lips salute

Heaven, and the face of all the gods, and dawn

Filling with maiden flames and maiden flowers

The starless fold o' the stars, and making sweet

The warm wan heights of the air, moon trodden ways

And breathless gates and extreme hills of heaven.

Whom, having offered water and bloodless gifts,

Flowers, and a golden circlet of pure hair,

Next Artemis I bid be favorable

And make this day all golden, hers and ours,

Gracious and good and white to the unblamed end.

But thou, O well-beloved, of all my days

Bid it be fruitful, and a crown for all, To bring forth leaves and bind round all my hair

With perfect chaplets woven for thine of thee.

For not without the word of thy chaste mouth,

For not without law given and clean command,

Across the white straits of the running sea '

From Elis even to the Acheloïan horn, I with clear winds came hither and gentle gods,

Far off my father's house, and left uncheered

Iasius, and uncheered the Arcadian hills And all their green-haired waters, and all woods

Disconsolate, to hear no horn of mine Blown, and behold no flash of swift white feet.

Meleager. For thy name's sake and awe toward thy chaste head,

O holiest Atalanta, no man dares

Praise thee, though fairer than whom all men praise,

And godlike for thy grace of hallowed

And holy habit of thine eyes, and feet
That make the blown foam neither
swift nor white

Though the wind winnow and whirl it, yet we praise

Gods, found because of thee adora-

And for thy sake praiseworthiest from all men:

Thee therefore we praise also, thee as these,

Pure, and a light lit at the hands of gods.

Toxeur. How long will ye whet spears

Toxeus. How long will ye whet spears with eloquence,

Fight, and kill beasts dry-handed with sweet words?

Cease, or talk still and slay thy boars at home.

Plexippus. Why, if she ride among us for a man,

Sit thou for her and spin; a man grown girl

Is worth a woman weaponed; sit thou here.

Meleager. Peace, and be wise; no gods love idle speech.

Plexippus. Nor any man a man's mouth woman-tongued.

Meleager For my lips hite not sharp.

Meleager. For my lips bite not sharper than mine hands.

Plexippus. Nay, both bite soft, but no whit softly mine.

Meleager. Keep thine hands clean; they have time enough to stain. Plexippus. For thine shall rest and

wax not red to-day.

Meleager. Have all thy will of words; talk out thine heart.

Althæa. Refrain your lips, O brethren, and my son, Lest words turn snakes and bite you

uttering them.

Toxeus. Except she give her blood

before the gods,
What profit shall a maid be among

What profit shall a maid be among men?

Plexippus. Let her come crowned and

stretch her throat for a knife, Bleat out her spirit, and die, and so shall

Through her too prosper and through prosperous gods:

But nowise through her living; shall she live

A flower-bud of the flower-bed, or sweet fruit

For kisses and the honey-making mouth, And play the shield for strong men and the spear? Then shall the heifer and her mate loc horns,

And the bride overbear the groom, and men
Gods; for no less division sunders these:

Since all things made are seasonable in time.

But if one alter unseasonable are all.

But thou, O Zeus, hear me that I may

This beast before thee and no man halve with me

Nor woman, lest these mock thee, though a god,

Who hast made men strong, and thou being wise be held

Foolish; for wise is that thing which endures.

Atalanta. Men, and the chosen of all this people, and thou,

King, I beseech you, a little bear with me.

For if my life be shameful that I live, Let the gods witness, and their wrath; but these

Cast no such word against me. Thou, O mine,

O holy, O happy goddess, if I sin

Changing the words of women and the works

For spears and strange men's faces, hast not thou

One shaft of all thy sudden seven that pierced
Seven through the bosom or shining

throat or side, All couched about one mother's loosen-

ing knees, All holy born, engraffed of Tantalus? But if toward any of you I am over

bold
That take thus much upon me, let him

think

How I, for all my forest holiness,

Fame, and this armed and iron maidenhood,

Pay thus much also; I shall have no man's love

Forever, and no face of children born Or feeding lips upon me or fastening eyes

Forever, nor being dead shall kings my sons

Mourn me and bury, and tears on daughters' cheeks Burn; but a cold and sacred life, but

strange, But far from dances and the back-

But far from dances and the backblowing torch,

Far off from flowers or any bed of man, Shall my life be forever: me the snows That face the first o' the morning, and cold hills

Full of the land-wind and sea-travelling storms

And many a wandering wing of noisy nights

That know the thunder and hear the thickening wolves —

Me the utmost pine and footless frost of woods

That talk with many winds and gods, the hours

Re-risen, and white divisions of the dawn,

Springs thousand-tongued with the intermitting reed,

And streams that murmur of the mother

snow — Me these allure, and know me; but no

Knows, and my goddess only. Lo

If one of all you these things vex at all. Would God that any of you had all the

And I no manner of memory when I

So might I show before her perfect eyes Pure, whom I follow, a maiden to my death.

But for the rest let all have all they will;

For is it a grief to you that I have part, Being woman merely, in your male might and deeds

Done by main strength? yet in my body is throned

As great a heart, and in my spirit, O men,

I have not less of godlike. Evil it were That one a coward should mix with you, one hand

Fearful, one eye abase itself; and these Well might ye hate and well revile, not me.

For not the difference of the several flesh

Being vile or noble or beautiful or base Makes praiseworthy, but purer spirit and heart

Higher than these meaner mouths and limbs, that feed,

Rise, rest, and are and are not; and for me,

What should I say? but by the gods of the world

And this my maiden body, by all oaths
That bind the tongue of men and the
evil will,

I am not mighty-minded, nor desire Crowns, nor the spoil of slain things nor the fame;

Feed ye on these, eat and wax fat; cry

Laugh, having eaten, and leap without a lyre;

Sing, mix the wind with clamor, smite and shake

Sonorous timbrels and tumultuous hair, And fill the dance up with tempestuous feet.

For I will none; but having prayed my prayers

And made thank-offering for prosperities,

I shall go hence, and no man see me more.

What thing is this for you to shout me down,

What, for a man to grudge me this my life

As it were envious of all yours, and I A thief of reputations? nay, for now, If there be any highest in heaven, a god Above all thrones and thunders of the

Throned, and the wheel of the world roll under him,

Judge he between me and all of you, and see

If I transgress at all: but ye, refrain

Transgressing hands and reinless mouths, and keep

Silence, lest by much foam of violent words

And proper poison of your lips ye die. Eneus. O flower of Tegea, maiden, fleetest foot And holiest head of women, have good cheer

Of thy good words: but ye, depart with her

In peace and reverence, each with blameless eye

Following his fate; exalt your hands and hearts,

Strike, cease not, arrow on arrow and wound on wound,

And go with gods, and with the gods return.

Chorus. Who hath given man speech? or who hath set therein

A thorn for peril and a snare for sin?

For in the word his life is and his breath,

And in the word his death,

That madness and the infatuate heart may breed

From the word's womb the deed

And life bring one thing forth ere 'all pass by,

Even one thing which is ours yet cannot die, —

Death. Hast thou seen him ever anywhere,

Time's twin-born brother, imperishable as he

Is perishable and plaintive, clothed with care

And mutable as sand,

But death is strong and full of blood and fair

And perdurable and like a lord of land?

Nay, time thou seest not, death thou wilt not see

Till life's right hand be loosened from thine hand,

And thy life-days from thee. For the gods very subtly fashion

Madness with sadness upon earth:

Not knowing in any wise compassion, Nor holding pity of any worth;

And many things they have given and taken,

And wrought and ruined many things; The firm land have they loosed and shaken,

And sealed the sea with all her springs;

They have wearied time with heavy burdens,

And vexed the lips of life with breath: Set men to labor and given them guerdons,

Death, and great darkness after death: Put moans into the bridal measure And on the bridal wools a stain;

And circled pain about with pleasure,
And girdled pleasure about with pair;
And strewed one marriage-bed with

And strewed one marriage-bed with tears and fire

For extreme loathing and supreme de sire.

What shall be done with all these tears of ours?

Shall they make water-springs in the fair heaven

To bathe the brows of morning? or like flowers

Be shed and shine before the starriest hours,

Or made the raiment of the weeping Seven?

Or rather, O our masters, shall they be Food for the famine of the grievous sea. A great well-head of lamentation

Satiating the sad gods? or fall and flor Among the years and seasons to and fro,

And fill them full with grieving ere they go?

Alas, our lords, and yet alas again! Seeing all your iron heaven is gilt as gold

But all we smite thereat in vain; Smite the gates barred with groanings

manifold,
But all the floors are paven with our pain.

Yea, and with weariness of lips and

With breaking of the bosom, and with sighs,

We labor, and are clad and fed with

And filled with days we would not fain behold

And nights we would not hear of; we wax old,

All we wax old and wither like a leaf.

We are outcast, strayed between bright sun and moon;

Our light and darkness are as leaves of flowers.

Black flowers and white, that perish; and the noon

As midnight, and the night as daylight hours.

A little fruit a little while is ours, And the worm finds it soon.

But up in heaven the high gods one by one

Lay hands upon the draught that quickeneth,

Fulfilled with all tears shed and all things done,

And stir with soft imperishable breath The bubbling bitterness of life and death.

And hold it to our lips, and laugh; but they

Preserve their lips from tasting night or day,

Lest they too change and sleep, the fates that spun,

The lips that made us and the hands that slay:

Lest all these change, and heaven bow down to none,

Change and be subject to the secular sway

And terrene revolution of the sun. Therefore they thrust it from them, putting time away.

I would the wine of time, made sharp and sweet

With multitudinous days and nights and tears And many mixing savors of strange

And many mixing savors of strange years,

Were no more trodden of them under feet,

Cast out and spilt about their holy places:

That life were given them as a fruit to eat. And death to drink as water; that the light

Might ebb, drawn backward from their eyes, and night

Hide for one hour the imperishable faces.

That they might rise up sad in heaven, and know

Sorrow and sleep, one paler than young snow,

One cold as blight of dew and ruinous rain;

Rise up and rest and suffer a little, and be

Awhile as all things born with us and we,

And grieve as men, and like slain men be slain.

For now we know not of them; but one saith

The gods are gracious, praising God; and one,

When hast thou seen? or hast thou felt his breath

Touch, nor consume thine eyelids as the sun,

Nor fill thee to the lips with fiery death? None hath beheld him, none

Seen above other gods and shapes of things,

Swift without feet and flying without wings,

Intolerable, not clad with death or life, Insatiable, not known of night or day,

The lord of love and loathing and of strife,

Who gives a star, and takes a sun away;

Who shapes the soul, and makes her a barren wife

To the earthly body and grievous growth of clay;

Who turns the large limbs to a little flame,

And binds the great sea with a little sand;

Who makes desire, and slays desire with shame;

Who shakes the heaven as ashes in his hand;

Who, seeing the light and shadow for the same,

Bids day waste night as fire devours a brand,

Smites without sword, and scouges without rod, —

The supreme evil, God.

Yea, with thine hate, O God, thou hast covered us,

One saith, and hidden our eyes away from sight,

And made us transitory and hazardous, Light things and slight;

Yet have men praised thee, saying, He nath made man thus,

And he doeth right.

Thou hast kissed us, and hast smitten; thou hast laid

Upon us with thy left hand life, and said, Live: and again thou hast said, Yield 'up your breath,

And with thy right hand laid upon us death.

Thou hast sent us sleep, and stricken sleep with dreams,

Saying, Joy is not, but love of joy shall be;

Thou hast made sweet springs for all the pleasant streams,

In the end thou hast made them bitter with the sea.

Thou hast fed one rose with dust of many men;

Thou hast marred one face with fire of many tears;

Thou hast taken love, and given us sorrow again;

With pain thou hast filled us full to the eyes and ears.

Therefore because thou art strong, our father, and we

Feeble; and thou art against us, and thine hand

Constrains us in the shallows of the sea And breaks us at the limits of the land:

Because thou hast bent thy lightnings as a bow,

And loosed the hours like arrows; and let fall

Sins and wild words and many a winged woe

And wars among us, and one end of all;

Because thou hast made the thunder, and thy feet

Are as a rushing water when the skies Break, but thy face as an exceeding heat, And flames of fire the eyelids of thine eyes;

Because thou art over all who are over

Because thy name is life, and our name death;

Because thou art cruel, and men are piteous,

And our hands labor, and thine hand scattereth:

Lo, with hearts rent and knees made tremulous,

Lo, with ephemeral lips and casual breath,

At least we witness of thee ere we die

That these things are not otherwise, but thus;

That each man in his heart sigheth, and saith,

That all men even as I,

All we are against thee, against thee,
O God most high.

But ye, keep ye on earth Your lips from over-speech,

Loud words and longing are so little worth;

And the end is hard to reach.

For silence after grievous things is good,

And reverence, and the fear that makes men whole,

And shame, and righteous governance of blood,

And lordship of the soul.

But from sharp words and wits men pluck no fruit,

And gathering thorns they shake the tree at root;

For words divide and rend;

But silence is most noble till the end.

Althæa. I heard within the house a cry of news,

And came forth eastward hither, where the dawn

Cheers first these warder gods that face the sun,

And next our eyes unrisen; for unaware Came clashes of swift hoofs and tram-

pling feet,
And through the windy pillared corridor

Light sharper than the frequent flames
of day

That daily fill it from the fiery dawn;

Gleams, and a thunder of people that cried out,

And dust and hurrying horsemen; lo their chief,

That rode with Œneus rein by rein, returned.

What cheer, O herald of my lord the king?

Herald. Lady, good cheer and great: the boar is slain.

Chorus. Praised be all gods that look toward Calydon.

Althaa. Good news and brief; but by whose happier hand?

Herald. A maiden's and a prophet's and thy son's.

Althaa. Well fare the spear that severed him and life.

Herald. Thine own, and not an alien, hast thou blest.

Althaa. Twice be thou too for my

sake blest and his. Herald. At the king's word I rode

afoam for thine. Althaa. Thou sayest he tarrieth till they bring the spoil?

Herald. Hard by the quarry, where they breathe, O queen.

Althaa. Speak thou their chance; but some bring flowers, and crown

These gods and all the lintel, and shed

Fetch sacrifice and slay; for Heaven is

Herald. Some furlongs northward where the brakes begin,

West of that narrowing range of warrior hills

Whose brooks have bled with battle when thy son Smote Acarnania, there all they made

And with keen eye took note of spear

and hound, Royally ranked: Lacrtes island-born,

The young Gerenian Nestor, Panopeus, And Cepheus and Ancœus, mightiest thewed.

Arcadians; next, and evil-eved of these, Arcadian Atalanta, with twain hounds Lengthening the leash, and under nose | Seeing where the green ooze of a sun and brow

Glittering with lipless tooth and fireswift eye;

But from her white braced shoulder the plumed shafts

Rang, and the bow shone from her side; next her

Meleager, like a sun in spring that strikes

Branch into leaf and bloom into the world.

A glory among men meaner: Iphicles, And following him that slew the biform bull

Pirithous, and divine Eurytion,

And, bride-bound to the gods, Æacides; Then Telamon his brother, and Argive-

The seer and sayer of visions and of truth.

Amphiaraus; and a fourfold strength, Thine, even thy mother's and thy sister's sons;

And recent from the roar of foreign foam

Jason, and Dryas twin-begot with war, A blossom of bright battle, sword and

Shining; and Idas; and the keenest

Of Lynceus; and Admetus twice-espoused:

And Hippasus and Hyleus, great in heart.

These having halted bade blow horns, and rode

Through woods and waste lands cleft by stormy streams,

Past yew-trees and the heavy hair of pines, And where the dew is thickest under

oaks. This way and that; but questing up

and down They saw no trail, nor scented; and

one said, -Plexippus, - Help, or help not, Arte-

And we will flay thy boar-skin with

male hands: But saying, he ceased and said not that

he would, struck marsh Shook with a thousand reeds untunable, And in their moist and multitudinous flower

Slept no soft sleep, with violent visions

The blind bulk of the immeasurable

And seeing, he shuddered with sharp lust of praise

Through all his limbs, and launched a double dart, And missed; for much desire divided

Too hot of spirit and feebler than his

will.

That his hand failed, though fervent; and the shaft,

Sundering the rushes, in a tamarisk stem Shook, and stuck fast. Then all abode save one.

The Arcadian Atalanta: from her side Sprang her hounds, laboring at the leash, and slipped,

And plashed ear-deep with plunging feet; but she,

Saying, Speed it as I send it for thy sake.

Coddess, drew bow and loosed; the sudden string

Rang, and sprang inward, and the waterish air

Hissed, and the moist plumes of the songless reeds

Moved as a wave which the wind moves no more. But the boar heaved half out of ooze

and slime His tense flank trembling round the barbèd wound,

Hateful; and fiery with invasive eyes And bristling with intolerable hair

Plunged, and the hounds clung, and green flowers and white Reddened and broke all round them

where they came. And charging with sheer tusk he drove,

and smote Hyleus; and sharp death caught his sudden soul,

And violent sleep shed night upon his

Then Peleus, with strong strain of hand And smote not; but Meleager, but thy and heart.

Shot; but the sidelong arrow slid, and slew

His comrade born and loving country-

Under the left arm smitten, as he no

Poised a like arrow; and bright blood brake afoam,

And falling, and weighed back by clam orous arms,

Sharp rang the dead limbs of Eurytion Then one shot happier, the Cadmean

Amphiaraus: for his sacred shaft Pierced the red circlet of one ravening

Beneath the brute brows of the sanguine boar,

Now bloodier from one slain; but he so galled Sprang straight, and rearing cried no

lesser cry Than thunder and the roar of winter-

ing streams That mix their own foam with the yel-

lower sea: And as a tower that falls by fire in fight

With ruin of walls and all its archery, And breaks the iron flower of wa. beneath.

Crushing charred limbs and molten arms of men:

So through crushed branches and the reddening brake Clamored and crashed the fervor of

his feet, And trampled, springing sideways from

the tusk. Too tardy a moving mould of heavy strength,

Ancæus; and as flakes of weak-winged snow

Break, all the hard thews of his heaving limbs

Broke, and rent flesh fell every way, and blood

Flew, and fierce fragments of no more a man.

Then all the heroes drew sharp breath, and gazed,

son,

Right in the wild way of the coming

Rock-rooted, fair with fierce and fastened lips,

Clear eyes, and springing muscle and shortening limb -

With chin aslant indrawn to a tightening throat,

Grave, and with gathered sinews, like a god, —

Aimed on the left side his well-handled spear

Grasped where the ash was knottiest hewn, and smote,

And with no missile wound, the monstrous boar

Right in the hairiest hollow of his hide Under the last rib, sheer through bulk and bone.

Deep in; and deeply smitten, and to death,

The heavy horror with his hanging shafts

Leapt, and fe'll furiously, and from raging lips

Foamed out the latest wrath of all his

And all they praised the gods with mightier heart,

Zeus and all gods, but chiefliest Artemis, Seeing; but Meleager bade whet knives and flay,

Strip and stretch out the splendour of the spoil;

And hot and horrid from the work all these

Sat, and drew breath, and drank and made great cheer,

And washed the hard sweat off their calmer brows.

For much sweet grass grew higher than grew the reed,

And good for slumber, and every holier herb.

Narcissus, and the low-lying melilote, And all of goodliest blade and bloom that springs

Where, hid by heavier hyacinth, violet buds

Blossom and burn; and fire of yellower flowers

And light of crescent lilies, and such leaves

As fear the faun's and know the dryad's foot;

Olive and ivy and poplar dedicate,

And many a wellspring over-watched of these.

There now they rest; but me the king bade bear Good tidings to rejoice this town and

thee. Wherefore be glad, and all ye give

much thanks.

For fallen is all the trouble of Calydon. Althæa. Laud ye the gods; for this they have given is good,

And what shall be, they hide until their

Much good and somewhat grievous hast thou said,

And either well; but let all sad things

Till all have made before the prosperous

Burnt-offering, and poured out the floral

Look fair, O gods, and favorable; for

Praise you with no false heart or flattering mouth,

Being merciful, but with pure souls and prayer.

Herald. Thou hast prayed well; for whoso fears not these, But once being prosperous waxes huge

of heart. Him shall some new thing unaware

destroy. Chorus. O that I now, I too were By deep wells and water-floods, Streams of ancient hills, and where All the wan green places bear Blossoms cleaving to the sod, Fruitless fruit, and grasses fair, Or such darkest ivy-buds As divide thy yellow hair, Bacchus, and their leaves that nod Round thy fawnskin brush the bare

Snow-soft shoulders of a god; There the year is sweet, and there Earth is full of secret springs, And the fervent rose-cheeked hours, Those that marry dawn and noon, There are sunless, there look pale

In dim leaves and hidden air,

Pale as grass or latter flowers Or the wild vine's wan wet rings Full of dew beneath the moon, And all day the nightingale Sleeps, and all night sings; There in cold remote recesses That nor alien eyes assail, Feet, nor imminence of wings, Nor a wind nor any tune, Thou, O queen and holiest, Flower the whitest of all things, With reluctant lengthening tresses And with sudden splendid breast Save of maidens unbeholden, There art wont to enter, there Thy divine swift limbs and golden Maiden growth of unbound hair, Bathed in waters white, Shine, and many a maid's by thee In moist woodland or the hilly Flowerless brakes where wells abound Out of all men's sight; Or in lower pools that see All their marges clothed all round With the innumerable lily, Whence the golden-girdled bee Flits through flowering rush to fret White or duskier violet, Fair as those that in far years With their buds left luminous And their little leaves made wet From the warmer dew of tears, Mother's tears in extreme need, Hid the limbs of Iamus, Of thy brother's seed; For his heart was piteous Toward him, even as thine heart now Pitiful toward us; Thine, O goddess, turning hither A benignant blameless brow; Seeing enough of evil done And lives withered as leaves wither In the blasting of the sun; Seeing enough of hunters dead, Ruin enough of all our year, Herds and harvests slain and shed, Herdsmen stricken many an one, Fruits and flocks consumed together, And great length of deadly days. Yet with reverent lips and fear Turn we toward thee, turn and praise For this lightening of clear weather And prosperities begun.

For not seldom, when all air As bright water without breath Shines, and when men fear not, fate Without thunder unaware Breaks, and brings down death. Joy with grief ye great gods give, Good with bad, and overbear All the pride of us that live, All the high estate, As ye long since overbore, As in old time long before, Many a strong man and a great, All that were. But do thou, sweet, otherwise, Having heed of all our prayer, Taking note of all our sighs; We beseech thee by thy light, By thy bow, and thy sweet eyes, And the kingdom of the night, Be thou favorable and fair; By thine arrows and thy might And Orion overthrown; By the maiden thy delight, By the indissoluble zone And the sacred hair.

Messenger. Maidens, if ye will sing now, shift your song,

Bow down, cry, wail for pity; is this a time For singing? nay, for strewing of dust and ash,

Rent raiment, and for bruising of the breast.

Chorus. What new thing wolf-like lurks behind thy words?

What snake's tongue in thy lips? what fire in the eyes?

Messenger. Bring me before the queen, and I will speak.

Chorus. Lo, she comes forth as from thank-offering made.

Messenger. A barren offering for a bitter gift.

Althæa. What are these borne on branches, and the face

Covered? no mean men living, but now slain

Such honor have they, if any dwell with death.

Messenger. Queen, thy twain brethren and thy mother's sons.

Althæa. Lay down your dead till I behold their blood

If it be mine indeed, and I will weep.

Messenger. Weep if thou wilt, for these men shall no more.

Althwa. O brethren, O my father's sons, of me

Well loved and well reputed, I should weep

Tears dearer than the dear blood drawn from you

But that I know you not uncomforted, Sleeping no shameful sleep, however slain.

Formyson surely hath avenged you dead.

Messenger. Nay, should thine own seed slay himself, O queen?

Althaa. Thy double word brings forth

a double death.

Messenger. Know this then singly, by

one hand they fell.

Althæa. What mutterest thou with

thine ambiguous mouth?

Messenger. Slain by thy son's hand:

is that saying so hard?

Althea. Our time is come upon us:

it is here.

Chorus. O miserable, and spoiled at

thine own hand!

Althea. Wert thou not called Meleager from this womb?

Chorus. A grievous huntsman hath it bred to thee.

Althea. Wert thou born fire, and shalt thou not devour?

Chorus. The fire thou madest, will it consume even thee?

Althau. My dreams are fallen upon me: burn thou too.

Chorus. Not without God are visions born and die.

Althea. The gods are many about me; I am one.

Chorus. She groans as men wrestling with heavier gods.

Althaa. They rend me, they divide me, they destroy.

Chorus. Or one laboring in travail of strange births.

Althea. They are strong, they are strong: I am broken, and these prevail.

Chorus. The god is great against her: she will die.

Althaa. Yea, but not now; for my heart too is great.

I would I were not here in sight of the sun.

But thou, speak all thou sawest, and i will die.

Messenger. O queen, for queenlike hast thou borne thyself,

A little word may hold so great mischance.

For, in division of the sanguine spoil, These men thy brethren wrangling bade

yield up
The boar's head and the horror of the hide.

That this might stand a wonder in Calydon,

Hallowed; and some drew toward them; but thy son,

With great hands grasping all that weight of hair,

Cast down the dead heap clanging and collapsed

At female feet, saying, This thy spoil, not mine,

Maiden, thine own hand for thyself hath reaped,

And all this praise God gives thee: she
thereat

Laughed, as when dawn touches the sacred night The sky sees laugh and redden and

divide

Dim lips and eyelids virgin of the sun,

Hers, and the warm slow breasts of morning heave,

Fruitful, and flushed with flame from lamp-lit hours,

And maiden undulation of clear hair Color the clouds; so laughed she from pure heart

Lit with a low blush to the braided hair,

And rose-colored and cold like very dawn,

Golden and godlike, chastely with chaste lips,

A faint grave laugh; and all they held their peace,

And she passed by them. Then one cried, Lo now,

Shall not the Arcadian shoot out lips at us,

Saying all we were despoiled by this one girl?

And all they rode against her violently, And cast the fresh crown from her hair, and now

They had rent her spoil away, dishonor-

ing her,

Save that Meleager, as a tame lion chafed,

Bore on them, broke them, and as fire cleaves wood

So clove and drove them, smitten in twain: but she

Smote not nor heaved up hand; and this man first,

Plexippus, crying out, This for love's sake, sweet,

Drove at Meleager, who with spear straightening

Pierced his cheek through; then Toxeus made for him,

Dumb, but his spear spake; vain and violent words,

Fruitless: for him too, stricken through both sides

The earth felt falling, and his horse's

Blanched thy son's face, his slayer.
And these being slain,

None moved nor spake; but Œneus bade bear hence

These made of heaven infatuate in their deaths,

Foolish; for these would baffle fate, and fell.

And they passed on, and all men honored her,

Being honorable, as one revered of heaven.

Althæa. What say you, women? is all this not well done?

Chorus. No man doth well but God

hath part in him.

Althora But no part here: for these

Althæa. But no part here; for these my brethren born

Ye have no part in, these ye know not of As I that was their sister, a sacrifice Slain in their slaying. I would I had

died for these;
For this man dead walked with me, child by child.

And made a weak staff for my feebler feet

With his own tender wrist and hand, and held

And led me softly, and showed me gold and steel

And shining shapes of mirror and bright crown,

And all things fair; and threw light spears, and brought

Young hounds to huddle at my feet, and thrust

Tame heads against my little maiden breasts,

And please me with great eyes; and those days went,

And these are bitter, and I a barren queen

And sister miserable, a grievous thing, And mother of many curses; and she

My sister Leda, sitting overseas

With fair fruits round her, and her faultless lord,

Shall curse me, saying, A sorrow and not a son,

Sister, thou barest, even a burning fire, A brand consuming thine own soul and me.

But ye now, sons of Thestius, make good cheer,

For ye shall have such wood to funeral fire

As no king hath; and flame that once burnt down Oil shall not quicken, or breath relume,

or wine Refresh again; much costlier than fine gold,

And more than many lives of wandering men.

Chorus. O queen, thou hast yet with thee love-worthy things,—

Thine husband, and the great strength of thy son.

Althæa. Who shall get brothers for me while I live?

Who bear them? who bring forth in lieu of these?

Are not our fathers and our brethren

And no man like them? are not mine here slain?

Have we not hung together, he and I, Flowerwise feeding as the feeding bees, With mother milk for honey? and this

With mother-milk for honey? and this man too,

Dead, with my son's spear thrust between his sides,

Hath he not seen us, later born than he, Laugh with lips filled, and laughed again for love?

There were no sons then in the world,

nor spears, Nor deadly births of women; but the gods

Allowed us, and our days were clear of these.

these.
I would I had died unwedded, and brought forth

No swords to vex the world; for these that spake

Sweet words long since, and loved me, will not speak

Nor love nor look upon me; and all my life

I shall not hear nor see them living men.

But I too living, how shall I now live?
What life shall this be with my son, to know

What hath been, and desire what will not be,

Look for dead eyes, and listen for dead lips,

And kill mine own heart with remembering them,

And with those eyes that see their slayer alive

Weep, and wring hands that clasp him by the hand?

How shall I bear my dreams of them, to hear

False voices, feel the kisses of false mouths

And footless sound of perished feet, and then

Wake, and hear only, it may be, their own hounds

Whine masterless in miserable sleep,

And see their boar-spears and their beds and seats

And all the gear and housings of their lives

And not the men? Shall hounds and horses mourn,

Pine with strange eyes, and prick up hungry ears,

Famish and fail at heart for their dear lords,

And I not heed at all? and those blind things

Fall off from life for love's sake, and I live?

Surely some death is better than some life,
Better one death for him and these and

me.
For, if the gods had slain them, it may

I had endured it; if they had fallen by

Or by the nets and knives of privy death And by hired hands while sleeping, this thing too

I had set my soul to suffer; or this hunt, Had this despatched them, under tusk

or tooth
Torn, sanguine, trodden, broken; for
all deaths

Or honorable, or with facile feet avenged

And hands of swift gods following, all save this,

Are bearable. But not for their sweet

land
Fighting, but not a sacrifice, lo these

Dead; for I had not then shed all mine heart Out at mine eyes: then either with good

speed, Being just, I had slain their slayer aton-

ingly,
Or strewn with flowers their fire, and on
their tombs

Hung crowns, and over them a song, and seen

Their praise outflame their ashes: for all men,

All maidens, had come thither, and from pure lips

Shed songs upon them, from heroic eyes

Tears; and their death had been a deathless life;

But now, by no man hired nor alien sword,

By their own kindred are they fallen, in peace,

After much peril, friendless among friends,

By hateful hands they loved; and how shall mine

Fouch these returning red and not from war,

These fatal from the vintage of men's veins,

Dead men my brethren? how shall these wash off

No festal stains of undelightful wine, How mix the blood, my blood on them, with me,

Holding mine hand? or how shall I say, Son,

That am no sister? But by night and

Shall we not sit and hate each other, and think

Things hate-worthy? not live with shamefast eyes,

Browbeaten, treading soft with fearful feet.

Each unupbraided, each without rebuke Convicted, and without a word reviled Each of another? and I shall let thee live

And see thee strong, and hear men for thy sake

Praise me, but these thou wouldest not let live

No man shall praise forever? these shall lie

Dead, unbeloved, unholpen, all through thee?

Sweet were they toward me living, and mine heart

Desired them, but was then well satisfied,

That now is as men hungered; and these dead

I shall want always to the day I die.

For all things else and all men may renew;

Yea, son for son the gods may give and take,

But never a brother or sister any more. Chorus. Nay, for the son lies close about thine heart,

full of thy milk, warm from thy womb,

and drains
Life, and the blood of life, and all thy

fruit,

Eats thee and drinks thee as who breaks

bread and eats,
Treads wine and drinks, thyself, a sect

Treads wine and drinks, thyself, a sect of thee;

And if he feed not, shall not thy flesh faint?

Or drink not, are not thy lips dead for thirst?

This thing moves more than all things, even thy son,

That thou cleave to him; and he shall honor thee,

Thy womb that bare him and the breasts he knew,

Reverencing most for thy sake all his gods.

Althaa. But these the gods too gave me; and these my son,

Not reverencing his gods, nor mine own heart,

Nor the old sweet years, nor all venerable things,

But cruel, and in his ravin like a beast. Hath taken away to slay them: yea, and she,

She the strange woman, she the flower, the sword,

Red from spilt blood, a mortal flower to men,

Adorable, detestable, — even she

Saw with strange eyes, and with strange lips rejoiced,

Seeing these mine own slain of mine own, and me

Made miserable above all miseries made,

A grief among all women in the world, A name to be washed out with all men's tears.

Chorus. Strengthen thy spirit: is this not also a god,

Chance, and the wheel of all necessities?

Hard things have fallen upon us from harsh gods,

Whom, lest worse hap, rebuke we not for these.

Althaa. My spirit is strong against itself, and I

For these things' sake cry out on mine own soul,

That it endures outrage, and dolorous days,

And life, and this inexpiable impotence.

Weak am I, weak and shameful; my breath drawn

Shames me, and monstrous things and violent gods.

What shall atone? what heal me? what bring back

Strength to the foot, light to the face?

what herb
Assuage me? what restore me? what release?

. What strange thing eaten or drunken, O great gods,

Make me as you, or as the beasts that feed,

Slay and divide and cherish their own hearts?

For these ye show us; and we less than these

Have not wherewith to live as all these things

Which all their lives fare after their

As who doth well rejoicing; but we ill, Weeping or laughing, we whom eyesight fails,

Knowledge and light of face and perfect heart,

And hands we lack, and wit; and all our days

Sin, and have hunger, and die infatuated.

For madness have ye given us, and not health,

And sins whereof we know not; and for these

Death, and sudden destruction, unaware. What shall we say now? what thing

comes of us?

Chorus, Alas! for all this all men

undergo.

Althæa. Wherefore I will not that these

twain, O gods,

Die as a dog dies, eaten of creeping things,

Abominable, a loathing; but though dead

Shall they have honor and such funereal flame

As strews men's ashes in their enemies' face,

And blinds their eyes who hate them: lest men say,

"Lo how they lie, and living had great kin;

And none of these hath pity of them, and none

Regards them lying, and none is wrung at heart,

None moved in spirit for them, naked and slain,

Abhorred, abased, and no tears comfort them;"

And in the dark this grieve Eurythemis, Hearing how these her sons come down to her

Unburied, unavenged, as kinless men, And had a queen their sister. That

were shame Worse than this grief. Yet how to

atone at all
I know not; seeing the love of my born

A new-made mother's new-born love, that grows

From the soft child to the strong man, now soft,

Now strong as either, and still one sole same love,

Strives with me, no light thing to strive withal:

This love is deep, and natural to man's blood,

And ineffaceable with many tears.

Yet shall not these rebuke me, though I die,

Nor she in that waste world with all her dead,

My mother, among the pale flocks fallen as leaves,

Folds of dead people, and alien from the sun;

Nor lack some bitter comfort, some poor praise,

Being queen, to have borne her daugh ter like a queen

Righteous; and though mine own fire burn me too,

She shall have honor, and these her sons, though dead.

But all the gods will, all they do, and

Not all we would, yet somewhat; and one choice

We have, to live and do just deeds and die.

Chorus. Terrible words she com munes with, and turns

Swift fiery eyes in doubt against herself, And murmurs as who talks in dreams with death.

Althaa. For the unjust also dieth, and him all men

Hate, and himself abhors the unrighteousness,

And seeth his own dishonor intoler-

But I being just, doing right upon my-

Slay mine own soul, and no man born shames me.

For none constrains nor shall rebuke, being done,

What none compelled me doing; thus these things fare.

Ah, ah! that such things should so fare; ah me!

That I am found to do them and endure, Chosen and constrained to choose, and bear myself

Mine own wound through mine own flesh to the heart

Violently stricken, a spoiler and a spoil, A ruin ruinous, fallen on mine own

Ah, ah! for me too as for these; alas! For that is done that shall be, and mine

Full of the deed, and full of blood mine eves.

That shall see never nor touch any thing Save blood unstanched and fire unquenchable.

Chorus. What wilt thou do? what ails thee? for the house

Shakes ruinously: wilt thou bring fire for it?

Althaa. Fire in the roofs, and on the lintels fire.

Lo ye, who stand and weave, between the doors,

There; and blood drips from hand and thread, and stains

Threshold and raiment and me passing

Flecked with the sudden sanguine drops of death.

Chorus. Alas that time is stronger than strong men,

Fate than all gods! and these are fallen on us.

Althaa. A little since, and I was glad; and now

I never shall be glad or sad again.

Chorus. Between two joys a grief grows unaware.

Althæa. A little while, and I shall laugh; and then

I shall weep never, and laugh not any more.

Chorus. What shall be said? for words are thorns to grief.

Withhold thyself a little, and fear the gods.

Althaa. Fear died when these were slain; and I am as dead,

And fear is of the living; these fear

Chorus. Have pity upon all people for their sake.

Althæa. It is done now: shall I put back my day?

Chorus. An end is come, an end. this is of God.

Althæa. I am fire, and burn myself: keep clear of fire.

Chorus. The house is broken, is broken; it shall not stand.

Althæa. Woe, woe for him breaketh; and a rod Smote it of old, and now the axe is

here. Chorus. Not as with sundering of the

Nor as with cleaving of the sea,

Nor fierce foreshadowings of a birth,

Nor flying dreams of death to

Nor loosening of the large world's girth,

And quickening of the body of night, And sound of thunder in men's

And fire of lightning in men's sight, Fate, mother of desires and fears,

Bore unto men the law of tears. But sudden, an unfathered lame,

And broken out of night, she shone, -

She, without body, without name, In days forgotten and foregone;

And heaven rang round her as she came,

Like smitten cymbals, and lay bare; Clouds and great stars, thunders and snows,

The blue sad fields and folds of air, The life that breathes, the life that grows,

All wind, all fire, that burns or blows.

Even all these knew her: for she is great,

The daughter of doom, the mother of death,

The sister of sorrow; a lifelong weight

That no man's finger lighteneth, Nor any god can lighten fate; A landmark seen across the way

Where one race treads as the other trod:

An evil sceptre, an evil stay, Wrought for a staff, wrought for a

The bitter jealousy of God.

For death is deep as the sea, And fate as the waves thereof.

Shall the waves take pity on thee, Or the south-wind offer thee love? Wilt thou take the night for thy day, Or the darkness for light on thy way,

Till thou say in thine heart Enough?

Behold, thou art over fair, thou art over wise;

The sweetness of spring in thine hair, and the light in thine eyes.

The light of the spring in thine eyes, and the sound in thine ears;

Yet thine heart shall wax heavy with sighs, and thine eyelids with tears.

Wilt thou cover thine hair with gold, and with silver thy feet?

Hast thou taken the purple to fold thee, and made thy mouth sweet? Behold, when thy face is made bare, he

that loved thee shall hate; Thy face shall be no more fair at the

Thy face shall be no more fair at the fall of thy fate.

For thy life shall fall as a leaf, and be shed as the rain;

And the veil of thine head shall be grief; and the crown shall be pain.

Althaa. Ho, ye that wail, and ye that sing, make way

Till I be come among you. Hide your

Ye little weepers, and your laughing lips,

Ye laughers, for a little; lo mine eyes That outweep heaven at rainiest, and

my mouth
That laughs as gods laugh at us!
Fate's are we,

Yet fate is ours a breathing-space; yea, mine, Fate is made mine forever; he is my

son,

My bedfellow, my brother. You strong

gods,

Give place unto me; I am as any of

To give life and to take life. Thou, old earth,
That hast made man and unmade; thou

whose mouth

Looks red from the eaten fruits of thine own womb;

Behold me with what lips upon what food

I feed and fill my body; even with flesh Made of my body. Lo, the fire I lit I burn with fire to quench it; yea, with

flame
I burn up even the dust and ash there-

of.

Chorus. Woman, what fire is this thou burnest with?

Althæa. Yea to the bone, yea to the blood and all.

Chorus. For this thy face and hair are as one fire.

Althaa. A tongue that licks and beats upon the dust.

Chorus. And in thine eyes are hollow light and heat.

Althaa. Of flame not fed with hand or frankincense.

or frankincense.

Chorus. I fear thee for the trembling

of thine eyes.

Althæa. Neither with love they trem

ble, nor for fear. Chorus. And thy mouth shuddering

Chorus. And thy mouth shudder ng like a shot bird.

Althea. Not as the bride's mouth when man kisses it.

Chorus. Nay, but what thing is this thing thou hast done?

Althaa. Look, I am silent, speak your eyes for me.

Chorus. I see a faint fire lightening from the hall.

Althaa. Gaze, stretch your eyes, strain till the lids drop off.

Chorus. Flushed pillars down the flickering vestibule.

Althaa. Stretch with your necks like birds: cry, chirp as they.

Chorus. And a long brand that blackens: and white dust.

Althæa. O children, what is this ye see? your eyes

Are blinder than night's face at fall of moon.

That is my son, my flesh, my fruit of life,

My travail, and the year's weight of my womb,

Meleager, a fire enkindled of mine

And of mine hands extinguished: this is he.

Chorus. O gods, what word has flown out at thy mouth?

Althea. I did this, and I say this, and I die.

Chorus. Death stands upon the doorway of thy lips,

And in thy mouth has death set up his

house.

Althæa. O death, a little, a little while,

sweet death, Until I see the brand burnt down and

chorus. She reels as any reed under

the wind, And cleaves unto the ground with stag-

gering feet.

Althæa. Girls, one thing will I say and

hold my peace.
I that did this will weep not nor cry out,
Cry ye and weep: I will not call on
gods,

Call ye on them; I will not pity man, Show ye your pity. I know not if I live;

Save that I feel the fire upon my face, And on my cheek the burning of a brand.

Yea, the smoke bites me; yea, I drink
the steam

With nostril and with eyelid and with lip

Insatiate and intolerant; and mine hands

Burn, and fire feeds upon mine eyes; I reel

As one made drunk with living, whence he draws

Drunken delight; yet I, though mad for joy,

Loathe my long living and am waven

Loathe my long living, and am waxen red

As with the shadow of shed blood; behold,

I am kindled with the flames that fade in him,

I am swollen with subsiding of his veins,

I am flooded with his ebbing; my lit
eyes
Floor with the falling fire that leaves

Flame with the falling fire that leaves his lids

Bloodless; my cheek is luminous with blood
Because his face is ashen. Yet, O

child, Son, first-born, fairest — O sweet mouth,

sweet eyes, That drew my life out through my suck-

ling breast,
That shone and clove mine heart
through — O soft knees

Clinging, O tender treadings of soft feet.

Cheeks warm with little kissings — O child, child,

What have we made each other? Lo,
I felt

Thy weight cleave to me, a burden of beauty, O son,

Thy cradled brows and loveliest loving lips.

The floral hair, the little lightening eyes
And all thy goodly glory; with mine
hands

Delicately I fed thee, with my tongue Tenderly spake, saying, Verily in God's time,

For all the little likeness of thy limbs, Son, I shall make thee a kingly man to fight, A lordiy leader; and hear before I

"She bore the goodliest sword of all the world."

Oh! oh! For all my life turns round

Oh! oh! For all my life turns round on me;

I am severed from myself, my name is gone,—

My name that was a healing, it is changed:

My name is a consuming. From this time,

Though mine eyes reach to the end of all these things,

My lips shall not unfasten till I die. Semichorus. She has filled with sigh-

ing the city,

And the ways thereof with tears; She arose, she girdled her sides, She set her face as a bride's; She wept, and she had no pity;

Trembled, and felt no fears.

Semichorus. Her eyes were clear as the sun,

Her brows were fresh as the day; She girdled herself with gold, Her robes were manifold;

But the days of her worship are done,

Her praise is taken away.

Semichorus. For she set her hand to the fire,

With her mouth she kindled the same;

As the mouth of a flute-player, So was the mouth of her;

With the might of her strong desire

She blew the breath of the flame. Semichorus. She set her hand to the wood.

She took the fire in her hand; As one who is nigh to death, She panted with strange breath She opened her lips unto blood,

She breathed and kindled the brand. Semichorus. As a wood-dove newly

shot,

She sobbed and lifted her breast; She sighed and covered her eyes, Filling her lips with sighs; She sighed, she withdrew herself no

She sighed, she withdrew herself not, She refrained not, taking not rest. Semichorus. But as the wind which is drouth,

And as the air which is death, As storm that severeth ships,

Her breath severing her lips, The breath came forth of her mouth, And the fire came forth of her

breath.

Second Messenger. Queen, and you maidens, there is come on us

A thing more deadly than the face of

death:

Meleager the good lord is as one slain.

Semichorus. Without sword, without sword is he stricken:

Slain, and slain without hand. Second Messenger. For as keen ice

divided of the sun His limbs divide, and as thawed snow

His limbs divide, and as thawed snow the flesh

Thaws from off all his body to the hair. Semichorus. He wastes as the embers quicken;

With the brand he fades as a brand. Second Messenger. Even while they sang, and all drew hither, and he Lifted both hands to crown the Arca-

dian's hair,

And fix the looser leaves, both hands
fell down.

Semichorus. With rending of cheek

Lament ye, mourn for him, weep. Second Messenger. Straightway the crown slid off, and smote on earth,

First fallen; and he, grasping his own hair, groaned,

And cast his raiment round his face, and fell.

Semichorus. Alas for visions that were,

And soothsayings spoken in sleep! Second Messenger. But the king twitched his reins in, and leapt down,

And caught him, crying out twice "O child!" and thrice,

So that men's eyelids thickened with their tears.

Semichorus. Lament with a long la mentation,

Cry, for an end is at hand.

Second Messenger. "O son!" he said,
"son, lift thine eyes, draw breath,
Pity me!" But Meleager with sharp
lips

Gasped, and his face waxed like as sunburnt grass.

Semichorus Cry aloud, O thou kingdom, O nation,

O stricken, a ruinous land!

Second Messenger. Whereat king Eneus, straightening feeble knees,

With feeble hands heaved up a lessening weight,

And laid him sadly in strange hands, and wept.

Semichorus. Thou art smitten, her lord, her desire,

Thy dear blood wasted as rain.

Second Messenger. And they with

Bear hither a breathing body, wept

And lightening at each footfall, sick to

Semichorus. Thou madest thy sword as a fire.

With fire for a sword thou art slain. Second Messenger. And lo, the feast turned funeral, and the crowns

Fallen; and the huntress and the hunter trapped;

And weeping and changed faces and veiled hair.

Meleager. Let your hands meet Round the weight of my head; Lift ye my feet

As the feet of the dead;

For the flesh of my body is molten, the limbs of it molten as lead.

Chorus. O thy luminous face,
Thine imperious eyes!
O the grief, O the grace,

As of day when it dies!
Who is this bending over thee, lord,
with tears and suppression of

sighs?

Meleager. Is a bride so fair?

Is a maid so meek?

With unchapleted hair, With unfilleted cheek,

Atalanta, the pure among women, whose name is as blessing to speak.

Atalanta. I would that with feet Unsandalled, unshod, Overbold, overfleet,

I had swum not nor trod

From Arcadia to Calydon northward, a blast of the envy of God.

Meleager. Unto each man his fate; Unto each as he saith

In whose fingers the weight Of the world is as breath;

Yet I would that in clamor of battle mine hands had laid hold upon death.

Chorus. Not with cleaving of shields
And their clash in thine ear,

When the lord of fought fields Breaketh spear-shaft from spear,

Thou art broken, our lord, thou art broken, with travail and labor and fear.

Meleager. Would God he had found me

Beneath fresh boughs! Would God he had bound me Unawares in mine house,

With light in mine eyes, and songs in my lips, and a crown on my brows!

Chorus. Whence art thou sent from us?

Whither thy goal? How art thou rent from us, Thou that wert whole,

As with severing of eyelids and eyes, as with sundering of body and soul!

Meleager. My heart is within me As an ash in the fire;

Whosoever hath seen me, Without lute, without lyre,

Shall sing of me grievous things, even things that were ill to desire.

Chorus. Who shall raise thee From the house of the dead?

Or what man praise thee

That thy praise may be said?
Alas thy beauty! alas thy body! alas
thine head!

Meleager. But thou, O mother, The dreamer of dreams,

Wilt thou bring forth another To feel the sun's beams

When I move among shadows a shadow, and wail by impassable streams?

Eneus. What thing wilt thou leave

Now this thing is done? A man wilt thou give me,

A son for my son,

For the light of mine eyes, the desire of my life, the desirable one?

Chorus. Thou wert glad above others, Yea, fair beyond word;

Thou wert glad among mothers; For each man that heard

Of thee, praise there was added unto thee, as wings to the feet of a bird.

Eneus. Who shall give back Thy face of old years,

With travail made black,

Grown gray among fears,
Mother of sorrow, mother of cursing,
mother of tears?

Meleager. Though thou art as fire Fed with fuel in vain,

My delight, my desire,

Is more chaste than the rain,
More pure than the dewfall, more holy
than stars are that live without
stain.

Atalanta. I would that as water My life's blood had thawn, Or as winter's wan daughter Leaves lowland and lawn

Spring-stricken, or ever mine eyes had beheld thee made dark in thy dawn.

Chorus. When thou dravest the men Of the chosen of Thrace,

None turned him again,

Nor endured he thy face
Clothed round with the blush of the

battle, with light from a terrible place.

Eneus. Thou shouldst die as he dies

For whom none sheddeth tears; Filling thine eyes

And fulfilling thine ears

With the brilliance of battle, the bloom and the beauty, the splendor of spears.

Chorus. In the cars of the world It is sung, it is told,

And the light thereof hurled And the noise thereof rolled

From the Acroceraunian snow to the ford of the fleece of gold.

Meleager. Would God ye could carry

Forth of all these; Heap sand and bury me

By the Chersonese
Where the thundering Bosphorus an
swers the thunder of Pontic seas.

Eneus. Dost thou mock at our praise

And the singing begun And the men of strange days

Praising my son

In the folds of the hills of home, high places of Calydon?

Meleager. For the dead man no home is;

Ah, better to be

What the flower of the foam is In fields of the sea,

That the sea-waves might be as my raiment, the gulf-stream a garment for me.

Chorus. Who shall seek thee and bring

And restore thee thy day, When the dove dipt her wing, And the oars won their way

Where the narrowing Symplegades whitened the straits of Propontis with spray?

Meleager. Will ye crown me my

Or exalt me my name,

Now my spirits consume, Now my flesh is a flame?

Let the sea slake it once, and men speak of me sleeping to praise me or shame.

Chorus. Turn back now, turn thee, As who turns him to wake;

Though the life in thee burn thee, Couldst thou bathe it and slake

Where the sca-ridge of Helle hangs heavier, and east upon west waters break?

Meleager. Would the winds blow me

Or the waves hurl me home?

Ah, to touch in the track
Where the pine learnt to roam

Cold girdles and crowns of the seagods, cool blossoms of water and foam! Chorus. The gods may release That they made fast; Thy soul shall have ease

In thy limbs at the last;

But what shall they give thee for life, sweet life that is overpast?

Meleager. Not the life of men's veins, Not of flesh that conceives;

But the grace that remains, The fair beauty that cleaves

To the life of the rains in the grasses, the life of the dews on the leaves.

Chorus. Thou wert helmsman and chief:

Wilt thou turn in an hour,

Thy limbs to the leaf, Thy face to the flower,

Thy blood to the water, thy soul to the gods who divide and devour?

Meleager. The years are hungry, They wail all their days;

The gods wax angry

And weary of praise;

And who shall bridle their lips? and who shall straiten their ways?

Chorus. The gods guard over us With sword and with rod;

Weaving shadow to cover us,

Heaping the sod,

That law may fulfil herself wholly to darken man's face before G.d.

Meleager. O holy head of Œneas, lo thy son

Guiltless, yet red from alien guilt, yet foul

With kinship of contamnated lives, Lo, for their blood i die; and mine

own blood For blood-shedding of mine is mixed therewith,

That death may no discern me from my kin.

Yet with clean heart die and faultless hand,

Not shamefully; thou herefore of thy love

Salute me, and bid fre among the

Well, as the dead far; for the best man dead

Faces sadly; nathle I now faring well

Pass without fear where nothing is to fear,

Having thy love about me and thy goodwill.

O father, among dark places and men dead.

Eneus. Child, I salute thee with sad heart and tears.

And bid thee comfort, being a perfect

In fight, and honorable in the house of peace.

The gods give thee fair wage and dues of death,

And me brief days and ways to come at thee.

Meleager. Pray thou thy days be long before thy death,

And full of ease and kingdom; seeing in death

There is no comfort and none aftergrowth,

Nor shall one thence look up and see day's dawn

Nor light upon the land whither I go. Live thou, and take thy fill of days, and

When thy day comes; and make not much of death,

Lest ere thy day thou reap an evil thing.

Thou too, the bitter mother and motherplague

Of this my weary body—thou too, queen, The source and end, the sower and the

scythe,

The rain that ripens and the drought that slays, The sand that swallows and the spring

that feeds, • To make me and unmake me, - thou, I

Althæa, since my father's ploughshare, drawn

Through fatal seedland of a female field.

Furrowed thy body, whence a wheaten

Strong from the sun and fragrant from the rains

I sprang, and cleft the closure of thy womb.

Mother, I dying with unforgetful tongue Hail thee as holy, and worship thee as just,

Who art unjust and unholy; and with

my knees Would worship, but thy fire and subtle-

Dissundering them, devour me; for these limbs

Are as light dust and crumblings from mine urn

Before the fire has touched them; and

my face As a dead leaf or dead foot's mark on

And all this body a broken barren tree That was so strong, and all this flower

of life Disbranched and desecrated misera-

And minished all that godlike muscle These, and I die; and what thing should and might.

And lesser than a man's: for all my Surely I know not; yet I charge thee, veins

Fail me, and all mine ashen life burns down.

I would thou hadst let me live; but gods averse,

But fortune, and the fiery feet of change, And time, these would not, these tread out my life, -

These and not thou; me too thou hast loved, and I

Thee; but this death was mixed with all my life,

Mine end with my beginning: and this

This only, slays me, and not my mother at all.

And let no brother or sister grieve too

Nor melt their hearts out on me with their tears.

Since extreme love and sorrowing overmuch

Vex the great gods, and over-loving men Slay and are slain for love's sake; and this house

Shall bear much better children; why should these

Weep? but in patience let them live their lives

And mine pass by forgotten: thou alone,

Mother, thou sole and only, thou no these,

Keep me in mind a little when I die

Because I was thy first-born; let the

Pity me, pity even me gone hence and dead.

Though thou wert wroth, and though thou bear again

Much happier sons, and all men later born

Exceedingly excel me, yet do thou

Forget not, nor think shame; I was the

Time was, I did not shame thee; and time was,

I thought to live, and make thee honorable

With deeds as great as these men's: but they live,

have been,

seeing

I am dead already, love me not the less. Me, O my mother! I charge thee by these gods,

My father's, and that holier breast of

By these that see me dying, and that which nursed,

Loveme not less, thy first-born: though grief come,

Grief only, of me, and of all these great joy, And shall are always to thee; for

thou knowst, O mother, O breass that bare me, for

ve know,

O sweet head of mynother, sacred eyes, Ye know my soulalbeit I sinned, ve know

Albeit I kneel no neither touch thy knces,

But with my lips kneel, and with my

I fall about thy fet and worship thee. And ye farewellnow, all my friends.

and ye, Kinsmen, much junger and glorious

more than

Sons of 10y moth's sister; and al. farewell

That were in Colchis with me, and bare down

The waves and wars that met us: and though times

Change, and though now I be not any thing,

Forget not me among you, what I did In my good time; for even by all those days,

Those days and this, and your own living souls,

And by the light and luck of you that live,

And by this miserable spoil, and me Dying, I beseech you, let my name not die.

But thou, dear, touch me with thy roselike hands,

And fasten up mine eyelids with thy mouth,

A bitter kiss; and grasp me with thine arms,

Printing with heavy lips my light waste flesh,

Made light and thin by heavy-handed fate.

And with thine holy maiden eyes drop dew,

Drop tears for dew upon me who am dead,

out sin done

I am gone down to the empty weary house Where no flesh is, nor beauty, nor swift

eyes,

Me who have loved thee; seeing with-

Nor sound of mouth, nor might of hands and feet.

But thou, dear, hide my body with thy veil,

And with thy raiment cover foot and head,

And stretch thyself upon me, and touch hands

With hands and lips with lips: be pitiful As thou art maiden perfect; let no man Defile me to despise me, saying, This

Died woman-wise, a woman's offering, slain

Through female fingers in his woof of life,

Dishonorable; for thou hast honored

And now for God's sake kiss me once and twice,

And let me go; for the night gathers me, And in the night shall no man gather fruit.

Atalanta. Hail thou! but I with heavy face and feet

Turn homeward, and am gone out of thine eves.

Chorus. Who shall contend with his lords,

Or cross them, or do them wrong? Who shall bind them as with cords? Who shall tame them as with song?

Who shall smite them as swords?

For the hands of their kingdom are strong.

## ERECHTHEUS: A TRAGEDY.

## DEDICATED TO MY MOTHER.

## PERSONS.

ERECHTHEUS. CHORUS OF ATHENIAN ELDERS.

PRAXITHEA. CHTHONIA. HERALD OF EUMOLPUS. MESSENGER. ATHENIAN HERALD. ATHENA.

and all men's days,

Earth, whom I chief of all men born would bless,

And call thee with more loving lips

than theirs Mother, for of this very body of thine

And living blood I have my breath and live. Behold me, even thy son, me crowned

of men,

Me made thy child by that strong, cunning god

Who fashions fire and iron, who begat Me for a sword and beacon-fire on thee, Me fosterling of Pallas, in her shade Reared, that I first might pay the nursing debt,

Hallowing her fame with flower of third-year feasts,

And first bow down the bridled strength of steeds

To lose the wild wont of their birth, and bear

Clasp of man's knees and steerage of his hand.

Or fourfold service of his fire-swift

That whirl the four-yoked chariot; me the king

Erechtheus. Mother of life and death | Who stand before thee naked now, and

O holy and general mother of all men born,

But mother most and motherliest of

Earth, for I ask thee rather of all the

What have we done? what word mistimed or work

Hath winged the wild feet of this timeless curse

To fall as fire upon us? Lo, I stand Here on this brow's crown of the city's

That crowns its lovely body, till death's

Waste it; but now the dew of dawn and birth

Is fresh upon it from thy womb, and

Behold it born how beauteous: one day more

I see the world's wheel of the circling

Roll up rejoicing to regard on earth

This one thing goodliest, fair as heaven

Worth a god's goze or strife of gods: but now

Would this day's ebb of their spent wave of strife

Sweep it to sea, wash it on wreck, and leave

A costless thing contemned; and in our stead,

Where these walls were, and sounding streets of men,

Make wide a waste for tongueless water-herds

And spoil of ravening fishes; that no more

Should men say, Here was Athens.
This shalt thou

Sustain not, nor thy son endure to see, Nor thou to live and look on; for the womb

Bare me not base that bare me miserable,

To hear this loud brood of the Thracian foam

Break its broad strength of billowybeating war

Here, and upon it as a blast of death Blowing, the keen wrath of a fire-souled king,

A strange growth grafted on our natural soil,

A root of Thrace in Eleusinian earth Set for no comfort to the kindly land, Son of the sea's lord and our first-born

foe,
Eumolpus; nothing sweet in ears of

The music of his making, nor a song Toward hopes of ours auspicious; for the note

Rings as for death oracular to thy

That goes before him on the sea-wind blown

Full of this charge laid on me, to put out

The brief light kindled of mine own child's life,

Or with this helmsman hand that steers the state

Run right on the under shoal and ridge

of death

The populous ship with all its fraughtage gone,

And sails that were to take the wind of time

Rent, and the tackling that should hold out fast

In confluent surge of loud calamities Broken, with spars of rudders and lost oars

That were to row toward harbor, and find rest

In some most glorious haven of all the world,

And else may never near it: such a song

The gods have set his lips on fire withal

Who threatens now in all their names to bring

Ruin; but none of these, thou knowest, have I

Chid with my tongue, or cursed at heart for grief,

Knowing how the soul runs reinless on sheer death

Whose grief or joy takes part against the gods.

And what they will is more than our

desire,
And their desire is more than what we

will.

For no man's will and no desire of man's
Shall stand as doth a god's will. Yet,

O fair

Mother, that seest me how I cast no

word Against them, plead no reason, crave no cause,

Boast me not blameless, nor beweep me wronged,

By this fair wreath of towers we have decked thee with,

This chaplet that we give thee woven of walls,

This girdle of gate and temple and cita-

del

Drawn round beneath thy bosom, and fast linked

As to thine heart's root,—this dear crown of thine,

This present light, this city, — be not thou

Slow to take heed nor slack to strengthen her,

Fare we so short-lived howsoe'er, and pay

What price we may to ransom thee thy

Not me my life; but thou that diest not, thou,

Though all our house die for this people's sake,

Keep thou for ours thy crown our city, guard

And give it life the lovelier that we died.

Chorus. Sun, that hast lightened and loosed by thy might

Ocean and Earth from the lordship of night,

Quickening with vision his eye that was veiled.

Freshening the force in her heart that had failed.

That sister fettered and blinded brother Should have sight by thy grace and delight of each other,

Behold now and see

What profit is given them of thee: What wrath has enkindled with madness of mind

Her limbs that were bounden, his face that was blind.

To be locked as in wrestle together, and lighten

With fire that shall darken thy fire in the sky,

Body to body and eye against eye In a war against kind,

Till the bloom of her fields and her high hills whiten

With the foam of his waves more

For the sea-marks set to divide of

The kingdoms to Ocean and Earth assigned.

The hoar sea-fields from the cornfields' gold,

His wine-bright waves from her vineyards' fold,

Frail forces we find

To bridle the spirit of gods or bind Till the heat of their hearts wax cold.

But the peace that was stablished between them to stand

Is rent now in twain by the strength of his hand

Who stirs up the storm of his sons over-

To pluck from fight what he lost of right, By council and judgment of gods that

spake And gave great Pallas the strife's fair stake,

The lordship and love of the lovely land,

The grace of the town that hath on it for crown

But a headband to wear

Of violets one-hued with her hair: For the vales and the green high places of earth

Hold nothing so fair,

And the depths of the sea bear no such birth

Of the manifold births they bear.

Too well, too well was the great stake worth

A strife divine for the gods to judge, A crowned god's triumph, a foiled god's grudge,

Though the loser be strong and the victress wise

Who played long since for so large a prize, The fruitful immortal anointed adored

Dear city of men without master or lord.

Fair fortress and fostress of sons born

Who stand in her sight and in thine, O

Slaves of no man, subjects of none; A wonder enthroned on the hills and

A maiden crowned with a fourfold glory

That none from the pride of her head may rend,

Violet and olive - leaf purple and hoary,

Song-wreath and story the fairest of fame,

Flowers that the winter can blast not or bend;

A light upon earth as the sun's own flame.

A name as his name.

Athens, a praise without end.

A noise is arisen against us of waters,

A sound as of battle come up from the sea.

Strange hunters are hard on us, hearts without pity;

They have staked their nets round the fair young city,

That the sons of her strength and her virgin daughters

Should find not whither alive to flee.

And we know not yet of the word unwritten,

The doom of the Pythian we have not heard:

From the navel of earth and the veiled mid altar

We wait for a token with hopes that falter,

With fears that hang on our hearts thought-smitten

Lest her tongue be kindled with no good word.

O thou not born of the womb, nor

In the bride-night's warmth of a changed god's bed,

But thy life as a lightning was flashed from the light of thy father's head,

O chief god's child by a motherless birth,

If aught in thy sight we indeed be worth,

Keep death from us thou, that art none of the gods of the dead under earth.

Thou that hast power on us, save, if thou wilt;

Let the blind wave breach not thy wall scarce built;

But bless us not so as by bloodshed, impute not for grace to us guilt, Nor by price of pollution of blood set

us free; Let the hands be taintless that clasp

thy knee,

Nor a maiden be slain to redeem for a

maiden her shrine from the
sea.

O earth, O sun, turn back Full on his deadly track Death, that would smite you black and mar your creatures,

And with one hand disroot All tender flower and fruit,

With one strike blind and mute the heaven's fair features,

Pluck out the eyes of morn, and make

Silence in the east and blackness whence the bright songs break.

Help, earth, help, heaven, that hear The song-notes of our fear,

Shrewd notes and shrill, not clear or joyful-sounding;

Hear highest of gods and stay

Hear, highest of gods, and stay Death on his hunter's way,

Full on his forceless prey his beagles hounding;

Break thou his bow, make short his hand,

Maim his fleet foot whose passage kills the living land.

Let a third wave smite not us, father, Long since sore smitten of twain,

Lest the house of thy son's son perish,

And his name be barren on earth. Whose race wilt thou comfort rather

If none to thy son remain?

Whose seed wilt thou choose to cherish

If his be cut off in the birth? For the first fair graft of his graffing Was rent from its maiden root

By the strong swift hand of a lover Who fills the night with his breath;

On the lip of the stream low-laughing Her green soft virginal shoot

Was plucked from the stream-side

By the grasp of a love like death. For a god's was the mouth that kissed

Who speaks, and the leaves lie dead, When winter awakes as at warning To the sound of his foot from Thrace.

Nor happier the bed of her sister, Though Love's self laid her abed

By a bridegroom beloved of the morning

And fair as the dawn's own face.

For Procris, ensnared and ensnaring
By the fraud of a twofold wile,

With the point of her own spear stricken,

By the gift of her own hand fell.
Oversubtle in doubts, overdaring

In deeds and devices of guile,

And strong to quench as to quicken, O Love, have we named thee well?

By thee was the spear's edge whetted That laid her dead in the dew,

In the moist green glens of the midland,

By her dear lord slain and thee. And him at the cliff's end fretted

By the gray keen waves, him too,

Thine hand from the white-browed headland

Flung down for a spoil to the sea.

But enough now of griefs gray-growing Have darkened the house divine,

Have flowered on its boughs, and faded.

And green is the brave stock yet.

O father all-seeing and all-knowing, Let the last fruit fall not of thine

From the tree with whose boughs we are shaded.

From the stock that thy son's hand set.

Erechtheus. O daughter of Cephisus, from all time

Wise have I found thee, wife and queen, of heart

Perfect; nor in the days that knew not wind

Nor days when storm blew death upon our peace Was thine heart swoln with seed of

pride, or bowed
With blacts of bitter foor that break

With blasts of bitter fear that break men's souls

Who lift too high their minds toward heaven, in thought

Too godlike grown for worship; but of mood

Equal, in good time reverent of time bad,

And glad in ill days of the good that were.

Nor now too would I fear thee, now misdoubt

Lest fate should find thee lesser than thy doom,

Chosen if thou be to bear and to be great

Haply beyond all women; and the word

Speaks thee divine, dear queen, that speaks thee dead,

Dead being alive, or quick and dead, in

Dead being alive, or quick and dead in one
Shall not men call thee living? yet 1

fear
To slay thee timeless with my proper

tongue, With lips, thou knowest, that love thee;

and such work Was never laid of gods on men, such

word
No mouth of man learnt ever, as from mine,

Most loath to speak, thine ear most loath shall take,

And hold it hateful as the grave to hear.

Praxithea. That word there is not in all speech of man,

King, that being spoken of the gods and thee

I have not heart to honor, or dare hold More than I hold thee or the gods in

hate
Hearing: but if my heart abhor it

heard
Being insubmissive, hold me not thy

wife, But use me like a stranger, whom thine

hand Hath fed by chance, and finding thence

no thanks
Flung off for shame's sake to forgetfulness.

Erechtheus. O, of what breath shall such a word be made,

Or from what heart find utterance?

Would my tongue
Were rent forth rather from the quiver-

ing root
Than made as fire or poison thus for

thee.

Praxithea. But if thou speak of blood,
and I that hear

Be chosen of all for this land's love to

And save to thee thy city, know this

Happiest I hold me of her seed alive. Exechtheus. O sun that seest, what saying was this of thine,

God, that thy power has breathed into

my lips?

For from no sunlit shrine darkling it came.

Praxithea. What portent from the mid oracular place

Hath smitten thee so like a curse that

Wingless, to waste men with its plagues? Yet speak.

Erechtheus. Thy blood the gods require not; take this first.

Praxithea. To me than thee more grievous this should sound.

Erechtheus. That word rang truer and bitterer than it knew.

Praxithea. This is not then thy grief, to see me die?

Erechtheus. Die shalt thou not, yet give thy blood to death.

Praxithea. If this ring worse, I know

not: strange it rang. Erechtheus. Alas! thou knowest not;

woe is me that know!

Praxithea. And woe shall mine be, knowing; yet halt not here. Erechtheus. Guiltless of blood this

state may stand no more.

Praxithea. Firm let it stand, whatever

bleed or fall. Erechtheus. O gods, that I should

say it shall, and weep! Praxithea. Weep, and say this? no tears should bathe such words.

Erechtheus. Woe's me that I must weep upon them! woe!

Praxithea. What stain is on them for thy tears to cleanse?

Erechtheus. A stain of blood unpurgeable with tears.

Praxithea. Whence? for thou sayest it is and is not mine.

Erechtheus. Hear then, and know why only of all men I

That bring such news as mine is, I alone

Must wash good words with weeping. I and thou,

Woman, must wail to hear men sing, must groan

To see their joy who love us; all our friends

Save only we, and all save we that love This holiness of Athens, in our sight

Shall lift their hearts up, in our hearing praise

Gods whom we may not; for to these they give

Life of their children, flower of all their seed,

For all their travail fruit, for all their hopes

Harvest; but we for all our good things,

Have at their hands which fill all these folk full

barrenness, child-slaughter, Death. curses, cares,

Sea-leaguer and land-shipwreck; which of these,

Which wilt thou first give thanks for? all are thine.

Praxithea. What first they give who give this city good,

For that first given to save it I give thanks

First, and thanks heartier from a happier tongue,

More than for any my peculiar grace Shown me and not my country; next for this.

That none of all these, but for all these I,

Must bear my burden, and no eye but mine

Weep of all women's in this broad land born

Who see their land's deliverance; but much more. But most for this I thank them most of

That this their edge of doom is chosen to pierce

My heart, and not my country's; for the

Drawn to smite there, and sharpened for such stroke

Should wound more deep than any turned on me.

Chorus. Well fares the land that bears such fruit, and well

The spirit that breeds such thought and speech in man.

Erechtheus. O woman, thou hast shamed my heart with thine,

To show so strong a patience: take then all;

For all shall break not nor bring down thy soul.

The word that journeying to the bright god's shrine

Who speaks askance and darkling, but his name

Hath in it slaying and ruin broad writ out,

I heard, hear thou: thus saith he: There shall die

One soul for all this people; from thy

Came forth the seed that here on dry bare ground

Death's hand must sow untimely, to bring forth

Nor blade nor shoot in season, being by name

To the under gods made holy, who require

For this land's life her death and maiden blood

To save a maiden city. Thus I heard, And thus with all said leave thee; for save this

No word is left us, and no hope alive. Chorus. He hath uttered too surely his wrath not obscurely, nor wrapt as in mists of his breath,

The master that lightens not hearts he enlightens, but gives them fore-knowledge of death.

As a bolt from the cloud hath he sent it aloud, and proclaimed it afar.

From the darkness and height of the horror of night hath he shown us a star.

Star may I name it, and err not, or fame shall I say,

Born of the womb that was born for the tomb of the day?

O Night, whom other but thee for mother, and Death for the father, Night,

Shall we dream to discover, save thee and thy lover, to bring such a sorrow to sight?

From the slumberless bed for thy bedfellow spread, and his bride

under earth,

Hast thou brought forth a wild and insatiable child, an unbearable birth.

Fierce are the fangs of his wrath and the pangs that they give;

None is there, none that may bear them, not one that would live. Chthonia. Forth of the fine-spun folds

of veils that hide
My virgin chamber toward the full-faced

sun
I set my foot, not moved of mine own

will, Unmaidenlike, nor with unprompted

speed Turn eyes too broad or dog-like un-

abashed On reverend heads of men and thence

on thine, Mother, now covered from the light

and bowed
As hers who mourns her brethren; but
what grief

Bends thy blind head thus earthward, holds thus mute,

I know not till thy will be to lift up Toward mine thy sorrow-muffled eyes, and speak;

And till thy will be, would I know this not.

Praxithea. Old men and childless, or if sons ye have seen

And daughters, elder-born were these than mine,

Look on this child, how young of years, how sweet,

How scant of time and green of age her life

Puts forth its flower of girlhood; and her gait

How virginal, how soft her speech, her eves

How seemly smiling. Wise should all ye be,

All honorable and kindly men of age: Now give me counsel and one word to say That I may bear to speak, and hold my peace

Henceforth for all time even as all ye

Dumb are ye all, bowed eyes and tongueless mouths,

Unprofitable: if this were wind that speaks,

As much its breath might move you. Thou then, child,

Set thy sweet eyes on mine; look

through them well; Take note of all the writing of my face

As of a tablet or a tomb inscribed

That bears me record; lifeless now, my life

Thereon that was, think written; brief to read,

Yet shall the scripture sear thine eyes as fire.

And leave them dark as dead men's. Nay, dear child, Thou hast no skill, my maiden, and no

To take such knowledge; sweet is all

thy lore, And all this bitter: yet I charge thee,

And love and lay this up within thine heart,

Even this my word: less ill it were to die.

Than live and look upon thy mother dead,

Thy mother-land that bare thee; no man slain

But him who hath seen it shall men count unblest. None blest as him who hath died and

seen it not. Chthonia. That sight some god keep

from me though I die! Praxithea. A god from thee shall

keep it: fear not this. Chthonia. Thanks all my life long

shall he gain of mine. Praxithea. Short gain of all yet shall

he get of thee. Chthonia. Brief be my life, yet so long live my thanks.

Praxithea. So long? so little; how long shall they live?

Chthonia. Even while I see the sunlight and thine eyes.

Praxithea. Would mine might shut ere thine upon the sun!

Chthonia. For me thou prayest unkindly; change that prayer.

Praxithea. Not well for me thou sayest, and ill for thee.

Chthonia. Nay, for me well, if thou shalt live, not I.

Praxithea, How live, and lose these loving looks of thine?

Chthonia. It seems I too, thus praying, then, love thee not.

Praxithea. Lov'st thou not life? what wouldst thou do to die?

Chthonia. Well, but not more than all things, love I life.

Praxithea. And fain wouldst keep it as thine age allows?

Chthonia. Fain would I live, and fain not fear to die.

Praxithea. That I might bid thee die not! Peace; no more.

Chorus. A godlike race of grief the gods have set

For these to run matched equal, heart with heart.

Praxithea. Child of the chief of gods, and maiden crowned,

Queen of these towers and fostress of their king,

Pallas, and thou my father's holiest head, A living well of life nor stanched nor

stained. O God Cephisus, thee too charge I

next, Be to me judge and witness; nor thine

ear Shall now my tongue invoke not, thou to me

Most hateful of things holy, mournfullest

Of all old sacred streams that wash the world,

Ilissus, on whose marge at flowery play A whirlwind-footed bridegroom found

my child, And rapt her northward where mine

elder-born Keeps now the Thracian bride-bed of a

Intolerable to seamen, but this land Finds him in hope for her sake favor-

A gracious son by wedlock: hear me

Thou likewise, if with no faint heart or false

The word I say be said, the gift be given,

Which, might I choose, I had rather die than give

Or speak and die not. Ere thy limbs were made,

Or thine eyes lightened, strife, thou knowest, my child,

'Twixt god and god had risen, which heavenlier name

Should here stand hallowed, whose more liberal grace

Should win this city's worship, and our

To which of these do reverence: first the lord

Whose wheels make lightnings of the foam-flowered sea

Here on this rock, whose height browbound with dawn

Is head and heart of Athens, one sheer

Struck, and beneath the friple wound that shook

The stony sinews and stark roots of the earth

Sprang toward the sun a sharp salt fount, and sank

Where lying it lights the heart up of the hill,

A well of bright strange brine; but she that reared

Thy father with her same chaste fostering hand

Set for a sign against it in our guard The holy bloom of the olive, whose hoar leaf

High in the shadowy shrine of Pandro-

Hath honor of us all; and of this strife The twelve most high gods judging with one mouth

Acclaimed her victress: wroth whereat, as wronged

That she should hold from him such That shake on us their shadow, till prize and place,

The strong king of the tempest-rifted sea Loosed reinless on the low Thriasian plain

The thunders of his chariots, swallowing stunned

Earth, beasts, and men, the whole blind foundering world

That was the sun's at morning, and ere

Death's; nor this only prey fulfilled his mind;

For with strange crook-toothed prows of Carian folk

Who snatch a sanguine life out of the Thieves keen to pluck their bloody

fruit of spoil From the gray fruitless waters, has

their god Furrowed our shores to waste them, as

the fields Were landward harried from the north

with swords Aonian, sickles of man-slaughtering

Ground for no hopeful harvest of live grain

Against us in Bœotia: these being spent, Now this third time his wind of wrath

has blown Right on this people a mightier wave

of war, Three times more huge a ruin; such its ridge

Foam-rinmed and hollow like the womb of heaven.

But black for shining, and with death for life Big now to birth and ripe with child,

full-blown With fear and fruit of havoc, takes the

Out of our eyes, darkening the day, and blinds The fair sky's face unseasonably with

change, A cloud in one and billow of battle, a

surge High reared as heaven with monstrous

surf of spears

men's heads

Bend, and their hearts even with its forward wind

Wither, so blasts all seed in them of hope

Its breath and blight of presage; yea,

The winter of this wind out of the deeps

Makes cold our trust in comfort of the gods,

And blinds our eye toward outlook; yet not here,

Here never shall the Thracian plant on high

For ours his father's symbol, nor with wreaths

A strange folk wreathe it, upright set and crowned

Here where our natural people born behold

The golden Gorgon of the shield's defence

That screens their flowering olive, nor strange gods

Be graced, and Pallas here have praise no more.

And if this be not I must give my child, Thee, mine own very blood and spirit of mine,

Thee to be slain. Turn from me, turn thine eyes
A little from me: I can bear not yet

To see if still they smile on mine or no, If fear make faint the light in them, or faith

Fix them as stars of safety. Need have we,

Sore need of stars that set not in mid storm,

Lights that outlast the lightnings; yet my heart

Endures not to make proof of thine or these,

Not yet to know thee whom I made, and bare

What manner of woman: had I borne thee man,

I had made no question of thine eyes or heart,

Nor spared to read the scriptures in them writ,

Wert thou my son; yet couldst thou then but die,

Fallen in sheer fight by chance and charge of spears,

And have no more of memory, fill no tomb

More famous than thy fellows in fair field,

Where many share the grave, many the praise;

But one crown shall one only girl my child

Wear, dead for this dear city, and give back life

To him that gave her and to me that bare,

And save two sisters living; and all this,

Is this not all good? I shall give thee, child,

Thee but by fleshly nature mine, to bleed

For dear land's love; but if the city fall What part is left me in my children then?

But if it stand, and thou for it lie dead, Then hast thou in it a better part than we,

A holier portion than we all; for each Hath but the length of his own life to live,

And this most glorious mother-land on earth

To worship till that life have end: but thine

Hath end no more than hers; thou, dead, shalt live

Till Athens live not; for the days and nights

Given of thy bare brief dark dividual life,

Shall she give thee half all her age long own

And all its glory; for thou givest her these;

But with one hand she takes, and gives again

More than I gave, or she requires of thee.

Come therefore, I will make thee fit for death;

I that could give thee, dear, no gift at birth

Save of light life that breathes and bleeds, even I

Will help thee to this better gift than mine.

And lead thee by this little living hand, That death shall make so strong, to that great end

Whence it shall lighten like a god's, and strike

Dead the strong heart of battle that would break

Athens; but ye, pray for this land, old

That it may bring forth never child on earth

To love it less, for none may more, than we.

Chorus. Out of the north wind grief came forth.

And the shining of a sword out of the sea.

Yea, of old the first-blown blast blew the prelude of this last,

The blast of his trumpet upon Rhodone.

Out of the north skies full of his cloud, With the clamor of his storms as of a crowd

At the wheels of a great king crying aloud,

At the axle of a strong king's car

That has girded on the girdle of war, -With hands that lightened the skies in sunder.

And feet whose fall was followed of thunder.

A god, a great god strange of name, With horse-yoke fleeter-hoofed than

flame. To the mountain bed of a maiden came.

Oreithyia, the bride mismated, Wofully wed in a snow-strewn bed With a bridegroom that kisses the

bride's mouth dead; Without garland, without glory, without

As a fawn by night on the hills belated,

Given over for a spoil unto the strong. From lips how pale so keen a wail

At the grasp of a god's hand on her she gave,

When his breath that darkens air made a havoc of her hair.

It rang from the mountain even to the wave, -

Rang with a cry, Woe's me, woe is me! From the darkness upon Hæmus to the

And with hands that clung to her new lord's knee,

As a virgin overborne with shame,

She besought him by her spouseless fame,

By the blameless breasts of a maid unmarried

And locks unmaidenly rent and harried, And all her flower of body, born

To match the maidenhood of morn, With the might of the wind's wrath wrenched and torn.

Vain, all vain as a dead man's vision Falling by night in his old friend's sight.

To be scattered with slumber and slain ere light:

Such a breath of such a bridegroom in that hour

Of her prayers made mock, of her fears derision.

And a ravage of her youth as of a flower.

With a leap of his limbs as a lion's, a cry from his lips as of thunder,

In a storm of amorous godhead filled with fire,

From the height of the heaven that was rent with the roar of his coming in sunder,

Sprang the strong god on the spoil of his desire.

And the pines of the hills were as green reeds shattered. And their branches as buds of the

soft spring scattered,

And the west wind and east, and the sound of the south,

Fell dumb at the blast of the north wind's mouth.

At the cry of his coming out of heaven.

And the wild beasts quailed in the rifts and hollows

Where hound nor clarion of huntsman follows,

And the depths of the sea were aghast, and whitened,

And the crowns of their waves were as flame that lightened,

And the heart of the floods thereof was riven.

But she knew not him coming for terror, she felt not her wrong that he wrought her,

When her locks as leaves were shed

before his breath,

And she heard not for terror his prayer, though the cry was a god's that besought her,

Blown from lips that strew the world-

wide seas with death.

For the heart was molten within her to hear,

And her knees beneath her were loosened for fear,

And her blood fast bound as a frost-

bound water, And the soft new bloom of the green

earth's daughter

Wind-wasted as blossom of a tree; As the wild god rapt her from earth's

breast lifted,

On the strength of the stream of his dark breath drifted,

From the bosom of earth as a bride from the mother,

With storm for bridesman and wreck for brother,

As a cloud that he sheds upon the sea.

Of this hoary-headed woe Song made memory long ago; Now a younger grief to mourn Needs a new song younger born. Who shall teach our tongues to reach What strange height of saddest

speech,

For the new bride's sake that is given to be

A stay to fetter the foot of the sea, Lest it quite spurn down and trample the town,

Ere the violets be dead that were plucked for its crown,

Or its olive-leaf whiten and wither?

Who shall say of the wind's way That he journeyed yesterday,

Or the track of the storm that shall sound to-morrow,

If the new be more than the graygrown sorrow?

For the wind of the green first season was keen,

And the blast shall be sharper than blew between

That the breath of the sea blows hither.

Herald of Eumolpus. Old men, gray borderers on the march of death, Tongue-fighters, tough of talk and sin

ewy speech,

Else nerveless, from no crew of such faint folk

Whose tongues are stouter than their hands come I

To bid not you to battle: let them strike Whose swords are sharper than your keen-tongued wail,

And ye, sit fast and sorrow; but what

Of all this land-folk and earth-laboring herd

For heart or hand seems foremost, him I call,

If heart be his to hearken, him bid forth To try if one be in the sun's sight born Of all that grope and grovel on dry ground

That may join hands in battle-grip for death

With them whose seed and strength is of the sea.

Chorus. Know thou this much for all thy loud blast blown,

We lack not hands to speak with, swords to plead,

For proof of peril, not of boisterous breath,

Sea-wind and storm of barren mouths that foam

And rough rock's edge of menace; and short space

May lessen thy large ignorance, and inform

This insolence with knowledge if there

Men earth-begotten of no tenderer thews

Than knit the great joints of the grim sea's brood

With hasps of steel together; heaven to help,

One man shall break, even on their own

flood's veige,

That iron bulk of battle; but thine eye That sees it now swell higher than sand or shore

Haply shall see not when thine host shall shrink.

Herald of Eumolpus. Not haply, nay, but surely, shall not thine. Chorus. That lot shall no god give

who fights for thee.

Herald of Eumolpus. Shall gods bear bit and bridle, fool, of men?

Chorus. Nor them forbid we, nor shalt thou constrai.

Herald of Eumcipus. Yet say'st thou none shall make the good lot mine?

Chorus. Of thy siar none, nor moved for fear of thee.

Herald of Eumolpus. Gods hast thou then to baffle gods of ours?

Chorus. Nor thine nor mine, but equal-souled are they.

Herald of Eumolpus. Toward good and ill, then, equal-eyed of soul?

Chorus. Nay, but swift-eyed to note where ill thoughts breed.

Herald of Eumolpus. Thy shaft wordfeathered flies yet far of me. Chorus, Pride knows not, wounded,

till the heart be cleft.

Herald of Eumolpus. No shaft wounds deep whose wing is plumed with words.

Chorus. Lay that to heart, and bid thy tongue learn grace.

Herald of Eumolpus. Grace shall thine own crave soon too late of mine.

Chorus. Boast thou till then, but I wage words no more.

Erechtheus. Man, what shrill wind of speech and wrangling air

Blows in our ears a summons from thy

Winged with what message, or what gift or grace

Requiring? none but what his hand may take

Here may the foe think hence to reap, nor this

Except some doom from Godward yield it him.

Herald of Eumolpus. King of this land-folk, by my mouth to thee

Thus saith the son of him that shakes thine earth,

Eumolpus; now the stakes of war are For land or sea to win by throw and

wear:

Choose therefore or to quit thy side, and give

The palm unfought for to his blocdless hand.

Or by that father's sceptre, and the foot Whose tramp far off makes tremble for pure fear

Thy soul-struck mother, piercing like a sword

The immortal womb that bare thee; by the waves

That no man bridles, and that bound thy world,

And by the winds and storms of all the

He swears to raze from eyeshot of the This city named not of his father's

name, And wash to deathward down one flood

of doom This whole fresh brood of earth yeaned naturally,

Green yet and faint in its first blade, unblown

With yellow hope of harvest: so do thou.

Seeing whom thy time is come to meet, fòr fear

Yield, or gird up thy force to fight and die.

Erechtheus. To fight then be it; for if to die or live, No man but only a god knows this

much vet, Seeing us fare forth, who bear but in

our hands The weapons not the fortunes of our

fight; For these now rest as lots that yet

undrawn

Lie in the lap of the unknown hour; but this

I know, not thou, whose hollow mouth of storm

Is but a warlike wind, a sharp salt breath

That bites and wounds not; death nor life of mine

Shall give to death or lordship of strange kings

The soul of this live city, nor their

Bruise her dear brow discrowned, nor snaffle or goad

Wound her free mouth or stain her sanguine side

Yet masterless of man; so bid thy lord Learn ere he weep to learn it, and too late

Gnash teeth that could not fasten on her flesh,

And foam his life out in dark froth of blood

Vain as a wind's waif of the loudmouthed sea,

Torn from the wave's edge whitening. Tell him this;

Though thrice his might were mustered for our scathe

And thicker set with fence of thornedged spears

Than sands are whirled about the wintering beach

When storms have swoln the rivers, and their blasts Have breached the broad sea-banks

with stress of sea,

That waves of inland and the main

make war
As men that mix and grapple; though
his ranks

Were more to number than all wildwood leaves

The wind waves on the hilis of all the world,

Yet should the heart not faint, the head not fall,

The breath not fail, of Athens. Say, the gods

From lips that have no more on earth to say

Have told thee this the last good news or ill

That I shall speak in sight of earth and sun

Or he shall hear and see them: for the

That ear of his from tongue of mine may take

Must be the first word spoken underground

From dead to dead in darkness. Hence; make haste,

make haste,
Lest war's fleet foot be swifter than thy
tongue,

And I that part not to return again

On him that comes not to depart away

Be fallen before thee; for the time is full,

And with such mortal hope as knows not fear

I go this high last way to the end of all.

Chorus. Who shall put a bridle in the mourner's lips to chasten them,

Or seal up the fountains of his tears for shame?

Song nor prayer nor prophecy shall slacken tears nor hasten them,

Till grief be within him as a burntout flame;

Till the passion be broken in his breast,

And the might thereof molten into rest,

And the rain of eyes that weep be dry,

And the breath be stilled of lips that sigh.

Death at last for all men is a harbor; yet they flee from it,

Set sails to the storm-wind, and again to sea;

Yet for all their labor no whit further shall they be from it,

Nor longer, but wearier, shall their life's work be.

And with anguish of travail until

Shall they steer into shipwreck out of sight,

And with oars that break and shrouds that strain

Shall they drive whence no ship steers again.

Bitter and strange is the word of the god most high,

And steep the strait of his way.

Through a pass rock-rimmed and narrow the light that gleams

On the faces of men falls faint as the dawn of dreams.

The dayspring of death as a star in an under sky

Where night is the dead men's day. As darkness and storm is his will that on earth is done.

As a cloud is the face of his strength.
King of kings, holiest of holies, and
mightiest of might,

Lord of the lords of thine heaven that are humble in thy sight,

Hast thou set not an end for the path of the fires of the sun,

To appoint him a rest at length? Hast thou told not by measure the

waves of the waste wide sea, And the ways of the wind their master and thrall to thee?

Hast thou filled not the furrows with fruit for the world's increase?

Has thine ear not heard from of old, or thine eye not read

The thought and the deed of us living, the doom of us dead?

Hast thou made not war upon earth, and again made peace?

Therefore, O father, that seest us whose lives are a breath,

Take off us thy burden, and give us not wholly to death

For lovely is life, and the law wherein all things live,

And gracious the season of each, and the hour of its kind,

And precious the seed of his life in a wise man's mind;

But all save life for his life will a base man give.

But a life that is given for the life of the whole live land,

From a heart unspotted a gift of a spotless hand,

Of pure will perfect and free, for the land's life's sake,

What man shall fear not to put forth his hand and take?

For the fruit of a sweet life plucked in its pure green prime

On his hand who plucks is as blood, on his soul as crime.

With cursing ye buy not blessing, not peace with strife,

And the hand is hateful that chaffers with death for life.

Hast thou heard, O my heart, and endurest

The word that is said,

What a garland by sentence found surest

Is wrought for what head?

With what blossomless flowerage of sea-foam and blood-colored foliage inwound

It shall crown as a heifer's for slaughter the forehead for marriage uncrowned?

How the veils and the wreaths that should cover

The brows of the bride

Shall be shed by the breath of what lover,

And scattered aside?

With a blast of the mouth of what bridegroom the crowns shall be cast from her hair,

And her head by what altar made humble be left of them naked and bare?

At a shrine unbeloved of a god unbeholden a gift shall be given for the land.

That its ramparts though shaken with clamor and horror of manifold waters may stand;

That the crests of its citadels crowned and its turrets that thrust up their heads to the sun

May behold him unblinded with darkness of waves overmastering their bulwarks begun.

As a bride shall they bring her, a prey for the bridegroom, a flower for the couch of her lord;

They shall muffle her mouth that she cry not or curse them, and cover her eyes from the sword.

They shall fasten her lips as with bit and with bridle, and darken the light of her face.

light of her face,

That the soul of the slayer may not falter his heart be not malten.

falter, his heart be not molten, his hand give not grace.

If she weep then, yet may none that hear take pity;

If she cry not, none should hearken though she cried.

Shall a virgin shield thine head for love, O city,

With a virgin's blood anointed as

for pride? Yet we held thee dear and hallowed

of her favor, Dear of all men held thy people to her heart:

Nought she loves the breath of blood, the sanguine savor,

Who hath built with us her throne and chosen her part.

Bloodless are her works, and sweet

All the ways that feel her feet; From the empire of her eyes Light takes life, and darkness flies; From the harvest of her hands Wealth strikes root in prosperous

lands:

Wisdom of her word is made: At her strength is strength afraid; From the beam of her bright spear War's fleet foot goes back for fear: In her shrine she reared the birth Fire-begotten on live earth; Glory from her helm was shed On his olive-shadowed head; By no hand but his shall she Scourge the storms back of the sea, To no fame but his shall give Grace, being dead, with hers to

And in double name divine Half the godhead of their shrine. But now with what word, with what woe may we meet

The timeless passage of piteous feet, Hither that bend to the last way's end They shall walk upon earth?

What song be rolled for a bride blackstoled

And the mother whose hand of her hand hath hold?

For anguish of heart is my soul's strength broken,

And the tongue sealed fast that would fain have spoken,

To behold thee, O child of so bitter a

That we counted so sweet.

What way thy steps to what bridefeast tend,

What gift he must give that shall wed thee for token

If the bridegroom be goodly to greet, Chthonia. People, old men of my city, lordly wise and hoar of head,

I, a spouseless bride, and crownless but with garlands of the dead,

From the fruitful light turn silent to my dark unchilded bed.

Chorus. Wise of word was he too surely, but with deadlier wisdom

First who gave thee name from under earth, no breath from upper skies.

When, foredoomed to this day's darkness, their first daylight filled thine eyes.

Praxithea. Child, my child that wast, and art but death's and now no more of mine,

Half my heart is cloven with anguish by the sword made sharp for

Half exalts its wing for triumph, that I bare thee thus divine.

Chthonia. Though for me the sword's edge thirst that sets no point against thy breast,

Mother, O my mother, where I drank of life and fell on rest,

Thine, not mine, is all the grief that marks this hour accurst and

Chorus. Sweet thy sleep and sweet the bosom was that gave thee sleep and birth;

Harder now the breast, and girded with no marriage-band for girth,

Where thine head shall sleep, the namechild of the lords of under earth.

Praxithea. Dark the name and dark the gifts they gave thee, child, in childbirth were,

Sprung from him that rent the womb of earth, a bitter seed to bear,

Born with groanings of the ground that gave him way toward heaven's dear air.

Chthonia. Day to day makes answer, first to last, and life to death: but I.

Born for death's sake, die for life's sake, if indeed this be to die,

This my doom that seals me deathless till the springs of time run dry. Chorus. Children shalt thou bear to memory, that to man shalt bring

forth none;

Yea, the lordliest that lift eyes and hearts and songs to meet the sun,

Names to fire men's ears like music till the round world's race be run.

Praxithea. I thy mother, named of gods that wreak revenge and brand with blame,

Now for thy love shall be loved as thou, · and famous with thy fame,

While this city's name on earth shall be for earth her mightiest name. Chthonia. That I may give this poor girl's blood of mine

Scarce yet sun-warmed with summer, this thin life

Still green with flowerless growth of seedling days,

To build again my city; that no drop Fallen of these innocent veins on the cold ground

But shall help knit the joints of her firm walls

To knead the stones together, and make sure

The band about her maiden girdlestead Once fastened, and of all men's violent

Inviolable forever, - these to me

Were no such gifts as crave no thanksgiving,

If with one blow dividing the sheer

I might make end, and one pang wind up all,

And seal mine eyes from sorrow: for such end

The gods give none they love not; but my heart.

That leaps up lightened of all sloth or

To take the sword's point, yet with one thought's load

Flags, and falls back, broken of wing, that halts

Maimed in mid flight for thy sake, and borne down,

Mother, that in the places where I played

An arm's-length from thy bosom and no more Shalt find me never, nor thine eye wax

glad

To mix with mine its eyesight, and for Laugh without word, filled with sweet

light, and speak

Divine dumb things of the inward spirit and heart,

Moved silently; nor hand or lip again Touch hand or lip of either, but for mine

Shall thine meet only shadows of swift night,

Dreams and dead thoughts of dead things; and the bed

Thou strewedst, a sterile place for all time, strewn

For my sleep only, with its void sad sheets

Shall vex thee, and the unfruitful cover-For empty days reproach me dead, that

leave No profit of my body, but am gone

As not one worth being born to bear no seed,

A sapless stock and branchless; yet thy womb

Shall want not honor of me, that brought forth

For all this people freedom, and for earth From the unborn city born out of my

To light the face of all men ever-

Glory; but lay thou this to thy great

Whereunder in the dark of birth conceived

Mine unlit life lay girdled with the

That bound thy bridal bosom; set this thought

Against all edge of evil as a sword

To beat back sorrow, that for all the world

Thou brought'st me forth a savior, who shall save

Athens; for none but I, from none but thee,

Shall take this death for garland; and the men

Mine unknown children of unsounded years,

My sons unrisen shall rise up at thine hand.

Sown of thy seed to bring forth seed to thee,

And call thee most of all most fruitful found

Blessed; but me too for my barren womb,

More than my sisters for their children born.

Shall these give honor, yea in scorn's own place

Shall n.en set love, and bring for mockery praise,

And thanks for curses; for the dry wild vine,

Scoffed at and cursed of all men, that was I,

Shall shed them wine to make the world's heart warm,

That all eyes seeing may lighten, and all ears

Hear and be kindled; such a draught to drink

Shall be the blood that bids this dust bring forth,

The chaliced life here spilt on this

mine earth,

Mine my great father's mother whom

Mine, my great father's mother; whom I pray

Take me now gently, tenderly take home,

And softly lay in his my cold chaste hand

Who is called of men by my name, being of gods

Charged only and chosen to bring men under earth,

And now must lead and stay me with his staff,

A silent soul led of a silent god,

Toward sightless things led sightless;

I see now but the shadow of mine end, And this last light of all for me in heaven.

Praxithea. Farewell I bid thee; so bid thou not me,

Lest the gods hear and mock us: yet on these

I lay the weight not of this grief, nor cast

Ill words for ill deeds back; for if one

They have done men wrong, what hurt have they to hear,

Or he what help to have said it? surely, child,

If one among men born might say it and live

Blameless, none more than I may, who being vexed

Hold yet my peace; for now through tears enough

Mine eyes have seen the sun that from this day

Thine shall see never more; and in the night

Enough has blown of evil, and mine

With wail enough the winds have filled, and brought

Too much of cloud from over the sharp sea

To mar for me the morning; such a blast

Rent from these wide void arms and helpless breast

Long since one graft of me disbranched, and bore

Beyond the wild ways of the unwan dered world,

And loud wastes of the thunder throated sea,

Springs of the night and openings of the heaven,

The old garden of the Sun; whence never more

From west or east shall winds bring back that blow

From folds of opening heaven or founts
of night

The flower of mine once ravished, born my child

To bear strange children; nor on wings of theirs Shall comfort come back to me, nor their sire

Breathe help upon my peril, nor his strength

Raise up my weakness; but of gods and men

I drift unsteered on ruin, and the wave Darkens my head with imminent height, and hangs

Dumb, filled too full with thunder that shall leave

These ears death-deafened when the tide finds tongue,

And all its wrath bears on them; thee, O child.

I help not, nor am holpen; fain, ah fain,

More than was ever mother born of

Were I to help thee; fain beyond all praver.

Beyond all thought fain to redeem thee,

More timeless from me sorrowing than the dream

That was thy sister; so shalt thou be too.

Thou but a vision, shadow-shaped of

sleep, By grief made out of nothing; now

but once I touch, but once more hold thee, one more kiss

This last time, and none other ever more,

Leave on thy lips, and leave them. Go. Thou wast

My heart, my heart's blood, life-blood of my life,

My child, my nursling: now this breast once thine

Shall rear again no children; never now

Shall any mortal blossom born like thee

Lie there, nor ever with small silent

Draw the sweet springs dry for an hour that feed

The blind blithe life that knows not: never head

Rest here to make these cold veins And strength to scathe forever; and warm, nor eye

Laugh itself open with the lips that

Lovingly toward a fount more loving: these

Death makes as all good lesser things now dead.

And all the latter hopes that flowered from these,

And fall as these fell fruitless; no joy

Shall man take of thy maidenhood, no tongue

Praise it; no good shall eyes get more of thee

That lightened for thy love's sake. Now, take note,

Give ear, O all ye people, that my word

May pierce your hearts through, and the stroke that cleaves

Be fruitful to them; so shall all that hear

Grow great at heart with child of thought most high,

And bring forth seed in season; this my child,

This flower of this my body, this sweet

This fair live youth I give you, to be slain.

Spent, shed, poured out, and perish; take my gift, And give it death and the under gods

who crave So much for that they give; for this is

more, Much more is this than all we; for they

Freedom, and for a blast, an air of

breath,

A little soul that is not, they give back Light for all eyes, cheer for all hearts, and life

That fills the world's width full of fame and praise

mightier love than children's. And This they give,

The grace to make thy country great, and wrest

From time and death power to take hold on her,

this gift,

Is this no more than man's love is or mine,

Mine and all mothers'? nay, where that seems more,

Where one loves life of child, wife, father, friend,

Son, husband, mother, more than this, even there

Are all these lives worth nothing, all loves else

With this love slain and buried, and their tomb

A thing for shame to spit on; for what love

Hath a slave left to love with? or the heart

Base-born and bound in bondage fast to fear,

What should it do to love thee? what hath he,

The man that hath no country? Gods nor men

Have such to friend, yoked beast-like to base life,

Vile, fruitless, grovelling at the foot of death.

Landless and kinless thralls of no man's blood,

Unchilded and unmothered, abject limbs

That breed things abject; but who loves on earth

Not friend, wife, husband, father, moth-

er, child, Nor loves his own life for his own

land's sake, But only this thing most, more this than

He loves all well, and well of all is loved.

And this love lives forever. See now, friends,

My countrymen, my brothers, with what heart

I give you this that of your hands again The gods require for Athens: as I give, So give ye to them what their hearts would have

Who shall give back things better; yea, and these

I take for me to witness, all these gods, Were their great will more grievous than it is,

Not one but three, for this one thinspun thread

A threefold band of children would I

For this land's love's sake; for whose love to-day

I bid thee, child, fare deathward and farewell.

Chorus. O wofullest of women, yet of all

Happiest, thy word be hallowed; in all time

Thy name shall blossom, and from strange new tongues

High things be spoken of thee; for such grace

The gods have dealt to no man, that on none

Have laid so heavy sorrow. From this day

Live thou assured of godhead in thy blood,

And in thy fate no lowlier than a god In all good things and evil; such a name Shall be thy child this city's, and thine own

Next hers that called it Athens. Go now forth

Blest, and grace with thee to the doors of death.

Chthonia. O city, O glory of Athens, O crown of my father's land, farewell.

Chorus. For welfare is given her of thee.

Chthonia. O goddess, be good to thy people, that in them dominion and freedom may dwell.

Chorus. Turn from us the strengths of the sea.

Chthonia. Let glory's and theirs be one name in the mouths of all nations made glad with the sun.

Chorus. For the cloud is blown back with thy breath.

Chthonia. With the long last love of mine eyes I salute thee, O land where my days now are done.

Chorus. But her life shall be born of thy death.

Chthonia. I put on me the darkness thy shadow, my mother, and symbol, O Earth, of my name.

Chorus. For thine was her witness from birth.

Chthonia. In thy likeness I come to thee darkling, a daughter whose dawn and her even are the same. Chorus. Be thine heart to her gra-

cious, O Earth!

Chthonia. To thine own kind be kindly, for thy son's name's sake.

Cherus. That sons unborn may praise thee and thy first-born son. Chthonia. Give me thy sleep, who give

thee all my life awake.

Chorus. Too swift a sleep, ere half

the web of day be spun.

Chthonia. Death brings the shears or ever life wind up the weft.

Chorus. Their edge is ground and sharpened: who shall stay his hand?

Chthonia. The woof is thin, a small short life, with no thread left.

Chorus. Yet hath it strength, stretched out, to shelter all the land.

Chthonia. Too frail a tent for covering, and a screen too strait.

Chorus, Yet broad enough for buck-

ler shall thy sweet life be.

Chthonia. A little bolt to bar off bat-

the from the gate.

Chorus. A wide sea-wall, that shatters the besieging sea.

Chthonia. I lift up mine eyes from the skirts of the shadow, From the border of death to the limits

of light;

O streams and rivers of mountain and meadow

That hallow the last of my sight,

O father that wast of my mother, Cephisus, O thou too his brother From the bloom of whose banks as

a prey Winds harried my sister away, O crown on the world's head lying

Too high for its waters to drown, Take yet this one word of me dying, O city, O crown!

Though land-wind and sea-wind with mouths that blow slaughter

Should gird them to battle against thee again,

New-born of the blood of a maiden thy daughter,

The rage of their breath shall be vain.

For their strength shall be quenched and made idle,

And the foam of their mouths find a bridle,

And the height of their heads bow down

At the foot of the towers of the town.

Be blest and beloved as I love thee Of all that shall draw from thee breath;

Be thy life as the sun's is above thee: I go to my death.

Chorus. Many loves of many a mood and many a kind

Fill the life of man, and mould the secret mind;

Many days bring many dooms, to loose and bind:

Sweet is each in season, good the gift it brings,

Sweet as change of night and day with altering wings, Night that lulls world-weary day, day

that comforts night, Night that fills our eyes with sleep, day

that fills with light.

None of all is lovelier, loftier love is

None of all is lovelier, lottier love is none,

Less is bride's for bridegroom, mother's less for son, Child, than this that crowns and binds

up all in one; Love of thy sweet light, thy fostering

breast and hand, Mother Earth, and city chosen, and natural land;

Hills that bring the strong streams forth, heights of heavenlier air,

Fields aflower with winds and suns, woods with shadowing hair.

But none of the nations of men shall they liken to thee,

Whose children true-born and the fruit of thy body are we.

The rest are thy sons but in figure, in

word are thy seed;
We only the flower of thy travail, thy
children indeed.

Of thy soil hast thou fashioned our limbs, of thy waters their blood,

And the life of thy springs everlasting is fount of our flood.

No wind oversea blew us hither adrift on thy shore,

None sowed us by land in thy womb that conceived us and bore.

But the stroke of the shaft of the sunlight that brought us to birth

Pierced only and quickened thy furrows to bear us, O Earth!

With the beams of his love wast thou cloven as with iron or fire,

And the life in thee yearned for his life, and grew great with desire.

And the hunger and thirst to be wounded and healed with his dart

Made fruitful the love in thy veins and the depth of thine heart.

And the showers out of heaven overflowing and liquid with love

Fulfilled thee with child of his godhead as rain from above.

Such desire had ye twain of each other, till molten in one

Ye might bear and beget of your bodies the fruits of the sun.

And the trees in their season brought forth and were kindled anew By the warmth of the moisture of mar-

riage, the child-bearing dew.

And the firstlings were fair of the wedlock of heaven and of earth;

All countries were bounteous with blossom and bourgeon of birth,

Green pastures of grass for all cattle, and life-giving corn; But here of thy bosom, here only, the

man-child was born.

All races but one are as aliens ingrafted

All races but one are as aliens ingrafted or sown,

Strange children and changelings; but we, O our mother, thine own.

Thy nurslings are others, and seedlings they know not of whom; For these hast thou fostered, but us

thou hast borne in thy womb.

Who is he of us all, O beloved, that owe thee for birth,

Who would give not his blood for his birth's sake, O mother, O Earth?

What landsman is he that was fostered and reared of thine hand

Who may vaunt him as we may in death though he die for the land?

Well doth she therefore who gives thee in guerdon

The bloom of the life of thy giving; And thy body was bowed by no fruitless burden,

That bore such fruit of thee living. For her face was not darkened for

fear,

For her eyelids conceived not a tear,

Nor a cry from her lips craved pity;

But her mouth was a fountain of song, And her heart as a citadel strong

That guards the heart of the city Messenger. High things of strong-

Souled men that loved their land On brass and stone are written, and their deeds

On high days chanted; but none graven or sung

That ever set men's eyes or spirits on fire,

Athenians, has the sun's height seen, or earth

Heard in her depth reverberate as from heaven,

More worth men's praise and good report of gods

Than here I bring for record in your ears.

For now being come to the altar, where as priest

Death ministering should meet her and

Death ministering should meet her, and his hand

Seal her sweet eyes asleep, the maiden stood,

With light in all her face as of a bride Smiling, or shine of festal flame by night

Far flung from towers of triumph; and her lips

Trembled with pride in pleasure, that

no fear Blanched them nor death before his

time drank dry
The blood whose bloom fulfilled them;

for her cheeks

Lightened, and brighter than a bridal veil

Her hair enrobed her bosom, and enrolled

From face to feet the body's whole soft length

As with a cloud sun-saturate; then she spake With maiden tongue words manlike,

but her eyes Lit mildly like a maiden's: Countrymen,

With more good-will and height of happier heart

I give me to you than my mother bare, And go more gladly this great way to death

Than young men bound to battle. Then with face

Turned to the shadowiest part of all the shrine,

And eyes fast set upon the further shade,

Take me, dear gods; and as some form had shone

From the deep hollow shadow, some god's tongue

Answered, I bless you that your guardian

Gives me to guard this country, takes my blood.

Your child's by name, to heal it. Then the priest

Set to the flower-sweet snow of her soft throat

The sheer knife's edge that severed it, and loosed

From the fair bondage of so spotless

So strong a spirit; and all that girt them round,

Gazing, with souls that hung on that sad stroke.

Groaned, and kept silence after while a

Might count how far the fresh blood crept, and bathed

How deep the dark robe and the bright shrine's base

Red-rounded with a running ring that

More large and duskier as the wells

Were drained of that pure effluence. But the queen

Groaned not nor spake nor wept, but as a dream

Floats out of eyes awakening, so passed forth

Ghost-like, a shadow of sorrow, from all sight, To the inner court and chamber where

she sits Dumb, till word reach her of this whole

> day's end. Chorus. More hapless born by far Beneath some wintrier star.

One sits in stone among high Lydian snows,

The tomb of her own woes:

Yet happiest was once of the daughters of gods, and divine by her sire and her lord,

Ere her tongue was a shaft for the hearts of her sons, for the heart of her husband a sword.

For she, too great of mind, Grown through her good things blind,

With godless lips and fire of her own breath

Spake all her house to death;

But thou, no mother unmothered, nor kindled in spirit with pride of thy seed,

Thou hast hallowed thy child for a blameless blood-offering, and ransomed thy race by thy deed.

Messenger. As flower is graffed or flower, so grief on grief Engraffed brings forth new blossoms

of strange tears, Fresh buds and green fruits of an alien

pain; For now flies rumor on a dark wide

wing, Murmuring of woes more than ye

knew, most like Hers whom ye hailed most wretched; for the twain

Last left of all this house that wore last night

A threefold crown of maidens, and to-

Should let but one fall dead out of the wreath,

If mad with grief we know not, and sore love

For this their sister, or with shame soul-stung

To outlive her dead, or doubt lest their lives too

The gods require to seal their country safe,

And bring the cracular doom to perfect end,

Have slain themselves, and fallen at the altar-foot

Lie by their own hands done to death;

Shakes all the city as winds a wintering tree,

And as dead leaves are men's hearts blown about

And shrunken with ill thoughts, and

flowerless hopes Parched up with presage, lest the pit-

eous blood

Shedof thesemaidens guiltless fall and fix On this land's forehead like a curse that cleaves

To the unclean soul's inexpiate hunted head

Whom his own crime tracks hotlier than a hound

To life's veiled end unsleeping; and this hour

Now blackens toward the battle that must close

All gates of hope and fear on all their hearts

Who tremble toward its issue, knowing not yet

If blood may buy them surety, cleanse or soil The helpless hands men raise, and reach

no stay.

Chorus. Ill thoughts breed fear, and fear ill words; but these

The gods turn from us that have kept their law.

Let us lift up the strength of our hearts in song,

hearts in song,
And our souls to the height of the

darkling day.

If the wind in our eyes blow blood for spray,

Be the spirit that breathes in us life more strong,

Though the prow reel round, and the helm point wrong,

And sharp reefs whiten the shoreward way.

For the steersman Time sits hidden astern,

With dark hand plying the rudder of doom,

And the surf-smoke under it flies like fume

As the blast shears off and the oarblades churn

The foam of our lives that to death return,

Blown back as they break to the gulfing gloom.

What cloud upon heaven is arisen, what shadow, what sound,

From the world beyond earth, from the night underground,

That scatters from wings unbeholden the weight of its darkness around?

For the sense of my spirit is broken, and blinded its eye,

As the soul of a sick man ready to die.

With fear of the hour that is on me, with dread if an end be not nigh.

O Earth, O gods of the land, have ye heart now to see and to hear What slays with terror mine eye-

sight, and seals mine ear?

O fountains of streams everlasting, are
all ye not shrunk up and withered

all ye not shrunk up and withered for fear?

Lo, night is arisen on the noon, and

her hounds are in quest by day, And the world is fulfilled of the noise of them crying for thei. prev.

And the sun's self stricken in heavenand cast out of his course as a blind man astray.

From east to west of the south sealine.

Glitters the lightning of spears that shine;

As a storm-cloud swoln that comes up from the skirts of the sea,

By the wind for helmsman to shoreward ferried,

So black behind them the live storm serried

Shakes earth with the tramp of its foot, and the terror to be.

land gave birth?

O Earth, fair mother, O sweet live Earth,

Hide us again in thy womb from the waves of it, help us or hide.

As a sword is the heart of the god thy brother,

But thine as the heart of a new-made mother,

To deliver thy sons from his ravin, and rage of his tide.

O strong north wind, the pilot of cloud and rain,

For the gift we gave thee what gift hast thou given us again?

O god dark-winged, deep-throated, a terror to forth-faring ships by night, What bride-song is this that is blown on the blast of thy breath?

A gift but of grief to thy kinsmen, a

song but of death,

For the bride's folk weeping, and woe for her father, who finds thee against him in fight.

Turn back from us, turn thy battle,

take heed of our cry;

Let thy dread breath sound, and the waters of war be dry;

Let thy strong wrath shatter the strength of our foemen, the sword of their strength and the shield;

As vapors in heaven, or as waves or the wrecks of ships,

So break thou the ranks of their spears with the breath of thy lips,

Till their corpses have covered and clothed as with raiment the face of the sword-ploughed field.

O son of the rose-red morning, O god twin-born with the day,

O wind with the young sun waking, and winged for the same wide

Give up not the house of thy kin to the host thou hast marshalled from northward for prey.

From the cold of thy cradle in Thrace, from the mists of the

fountains of night,

From the bride-bed of dawn whence day leaps laughing, on fire for his flight,

Shall the sea give death whom the Come down with their doom in thine hand on the ships thou hast brought up against us to fight.

> For now not in word but in deed is the harvest of spears begun,

> And its clamor outbellows the thunder, its lightning outlightens the sun.

> From the springs of the morning it thunders and lightens across and afar

> To the wave where the moonset ends, and the fall of the last low star.

> With a trampling of drenched red hoofs and an earthquake of men that meet.

> Strong War sets hand to the scythe, and the furrows take fire from his

> Earth groans from her great rent heart, and the hollows of rocks are afraid.

> And the mountains are moved, and the valleys as waves in a storm-wind swayed.

> From the roots of the hills to the plain's dim verge and the dark loud shore,

> Air shudders with shrill spears crossing, and hurtling of wheels that

> As the grinding of teeth in the jaws of a lion that foam as they gnash,

> Is the shriek of the axles that loosen, the shock of the poles that crash.

> The dense manes darken and glitter, the mouths of the mad steeds champ,

> Their heads flash blind through the battle, and death's foo' rings in their tramp.

> For a fourfold host upon earth and in heaven is arrayed for the fight,

> Clouds ruining in thunder and armies encountering as clouds in the

> Mine ears are amazed with the terror of trumpets, with darkness mine eves,

> At the sound of the sea's host charging that deafens the roar of the skv's.

White frontlet is dashed upon frontlet, and horse against horse reels hurled,

And the gorge of the gulfs of the battle is wide for the spoil of the

world.

And the meadows are cumbered with shipwreck of chariots that founder on land,

And the horsemen are broken with breach as of breakers, and scattered as sand.

Through the roar and recoil of the charges that mingle their cries and confound,

Like fire are the notes of the trumpets that flash through the darkness

of sound.

As the swing of the sea churned yellow that sways with the wind as it swells,

Is the lift and relapse of the wave of the chargers that clash with their bells;

And the clang of the sharp shrill brass through the burst of the wave as it shocks

Rings clean as the clear winds cry through the roar of the surge on the rocks;

And the heads of the steeds in their headgear of war, and their corseleted breasts,

Gleam broad as the brows of the billows that brighten the storm

with their crests,

Gleam dread as their bosoms that heave to the shipwrecking wind as they rise,

Filled full of the terror and thunder of water, that slays as it dies.

So dire is the glare of their foreheads, so fearful the fire of their breath,

And the light of their eyeballs enkindled so bright with the light-

nings of death;

And the foam of their mouths as the sea's when the jaws of its gulf are as graves,

And the ridge of their necks as the wind-shaken mane on the ridges of waves;

And their fetlocks afire as they rear drip thick with a dewfall of blood As the lips of the rearing breaker with froth of the man-slaying flood;

And the whole plain reels and resounds as the fields of the sea by night

When the stroke of the wind falls darkling, and death is the seafarer's light.

But thou, fair beauty of heaven, dear face of the day nigh dead,

What horror hath hidden thyglory, what hand hath muffled thine head?

O sun, with what song shall we call thee, or ward off thy wrath by what name,

With what prayer shall we seek to thee, soothe with what incense, assuage with what gift,

If thy light be such only as lightens to deathward the seaman adrift

With the fire of his house for a beacon, that foemen have wasted with flame?

Arise now, lift up thy light; give ear to us, put forth thine hand,

Reach toward us thy torch of deliverance, a lamp for the night of the land.

Thine eye is the light of the living, no lamp for the dead;

Oh, lift up the light of thine eye on the dark of our dread!

Who hath blinded thee? who hath prevailed on thee? who hath ensnared?

Who hath broken thy bow, and the shafts for thy battle prepared?

Have they found out a fetter to bind thee, a chain for thine arm that was bared?

Be the name of thy conqueror set forth, and the might of thy master declared.

O god, fair god of the morning, O glory of day,

What ails thee to cast from thy forehead its garland away?

To pluck from thy temples their chaplet enwreathed of the light,

And bind on the brows of thy god head a frontlet of night?

Thou hast loosened the necks of thine horses, and goaded their flanks with affright,

To the race of a course that we know not, on ways that are hid from

our sight.

As a wind through the darkness the wheels of their chariot are whirled,

And the light of its passage is night on the face of the world.

And there falls from the wings of thy glory no help from on high,

But a shadow that smites us with fear and desire of thine eye.

For our hearts are as reeds that a wind on the water bows down and goes by,

To behold not thy comfort in heaven that hath left us untimely to die. But what light is it now leaps forth

on the land

Enkindling the waters and ways of the air

From thy forehead made bare,

From the gleam of thy bow-bearing hand?

Hast thou set not thy right hand again to the string,

With the back-bowed horns bent sharp for a spring

And the barbed shaft drawn,

Till the shrill steel sing, and the tense nerve ring,

That pierces the heart of the dark with dawn,

O huntsman, O king,

When the flame of thy face hath twilight in chase

As a hound hath a blood-mottled fawn? He has glanced into golden the gray sea-strands,

And the clouds are shot through with the fires of his hands,

And the height of the hollow of heaven that he fills

As the heart of a strong man is quickened and thrills;

High over the folds of the low-lying lands,

On the shadowless hills

As a guard on his watch-tower he stands.

All earth and all ocean, all depth and all height,
At the flash of an eyebeam are filled

with his might:

The sea roars backward, the storm drops dumb,

And silence as dew on the fire of the fight

Falls kind in our ears as his face in our sight

With presage of peace to come. Fresh hope in my heart from the

ashes of dread Leaps clear as a flame from the pyres

of the dead,

That joy out of woe

May arise as the spring out of tempest and snow,

With the flower-feasted month in hei hands rose-red

Borne soft as a babe from the bearing-bed.

Yet it knows not indeed if a god be friend,

If rescue may be from the rage of the sea,

Or the wrath of its lord have

end.
For the season is full now of death

or of birth,

To bring forth life, or an end of all; And we know not if any thing stand or fall

That is girdled about with the round sea's girth

As a town with its wall;

But thou that art highest of the gods most high,

That art lord if we live, that art lord though we die,

Have heed of the tongues of our terror that cry

For a grace to the children of Earth.

Athenian Herald. Sons of Athens,
heavy-laden with the holy weight
of years,

Be your hearts as young men's lightened of their loathlier load of fears;

For the wave is sunk whose thunder shoreward shook the shuddering lands,

And unbreached of warring waters
Athens like a sea-rock stands.

Chorus. Well thy word has cheered us, well thy face and glittering eyes, that spake

Ere thy tongue spake words of comfort; yet no pause behoves it make

Till the whole good hap find utterance that the gods have given at length.

Athenian Herald. All is this, that yet the city stands unforced by

stranger strength.

Chorus. Sweeter sound might no mouth utter in man's ear than this thy word.

Athenian Herald. Feed thy soul then full of sweetness till some bit-

terer note be heard.

Chorus. None, if this ring sure, can mar the music fallen from heaven as rain.

Athenian Herald. If no fire of sun or star untimely sear the tender

grain.

Chorus. Fresh the dewfall of thy tidings on our hopes reflowering lies.

Athenian Herald. Till a joyless shower and fruitless blight them, rain-

ing from thine eyes.

Chorus. Bitter springs have barren issues; these bedew grief's arid sands.

Athenian Herald. Such thank-offerings ask such altars as expect thy suppliant hands.

Chorus. Tears for triumph, wail for welfare, what strange godhead's

shrine requires?

Athenian Herald. Death's or victory's be it, a funeral torch feeds all its festal fires.

Chorus. Like a star should burn the beacon flaming from our city's head.

Athenian Herald. Like a balefire should the flame go up that says the king is dead.

Chorus. Out of heaven, a wild-haired meteor, shoots this new sign,

scattering fear.

Athenian Herald. Yea, the word has wings of fire that hovered, loath to burn thine ear.

Chorus. From thy lips it leapt forth loosened on a shrill and shadowy wing.

Athenian Herald. Long they faltered, fain to hide it deep as death that

hides the king.

Chorus. Dead with him blind hope lies blasted by the lightning of one sword.

Athenian Herald. On thy tongue truth wars with error: no man's edge hath touched thy lord.

Chorus. False was thine then, jangling menace like a war-steed's

brow-bound bell?

Athenian Herald. False it rang not joy nor sorrow; but by no man's hand he fell.

Chorus. Vainly then good news and evil through so faint a trumpet

spake.

Athenian Herald. All too long thy soul yet labors, as who sleeping fain would wake,

Waking, fain would fall on sleep again; the woe thou knowest not yet,

When thou knowest, shall make thy memory thirst and hunger to forget.

Chorus. Long my heart has hearkened, hanging on thy clamorous

ominous cry,

Fain yet fearful of the knowledge whence it looks to live or die;

Now to take the perfect presage of thy dark and sidelong flight

Comes a surer soothsayer sorrowing, sable-stoled as birds of night.

Praxithea. Man, what thy mother bare thee born to say,

Speak; for no word yet wavering on thy lip

Can wound me worse than thought forestalls or fear.

Athenian Herald. I have no will to weave too fine or far,

O queen, the weft of sweet with bitter speech,

Bright words with darkling; but the brief truth shown

Shall plead my pardon for a lingering tongue,

Loath yet to strike hope through the heart, and slay.

The sun's light still was lordly housed in heaven

When the twain fronts of war encountering smote

First fire out of the battle; but not long Had the fresh wave of windy fight begun

Heaving, and all the surge of swords to sway,

When timeless night laid hold of heaven, and took

With its great gorge the noon as in a gulf,

Strangled; and thicker than the shrillwinged shafts

Flew the fleet lightnings, held in chase through heaven

By headlong heat of thunders on their

Loosed as on quest of quarry; that our

host, Smit with sick presage of some wrath-

ful god, Quailed, but the foe as from one iron throat

With one great sheer sole thousand-

throated cry
Shook earth, heart-staggered from their

shout, and clove The eyeless hollow of heaven; and

breached therewith

As with an onset of strength-shattering sound,

The rent vault of the roaring noon of night

From her throned seat of usurpation rang Reverberate answer; such response

there pealed As though the tide's charge of a storm-

ing sea
Had burst the sky's wall, and made

broad a breach
In the ambient girth and bastion flanked

with stars
Guarding the fortress of the gods, and

charding the fortress of the gods, and all Crashed now together on ruin; and

through that cry,
And higher above it, ceasing, one man's

And higher above it, ceasing, one man's note

Tore its way like a trumpet: Charge, make end,

Charge, halt not, strike, rend up their

Charge, halt not, strike, rend up their strength by the roots,

Strike, break them, make your birthright's promise sure,

Show your hearts hardier than the fenced land breeds,

And souls breathed in you from no spirit

And souls breathed in you from no spirit of earth,

Sons of the sea's waves! And all ears that heard

Rang with that fiery cry that the fine

Rang with that fiery cry, that the fine air

Thereat was fired, and kindling filled the plain

Full of that fierce and trumpet-quenching breath

That spake the clarions silent; no glad song

For folk to hear that wist how dire a

For folk to hear that wist how dire a

Begat this peril to them, what strong race

Fathered the sea-born tongue that sang them death,

Threatening: so raged through the red foam of fight

Poseidon's son Eumolpus; and the war Quailed round him coming, and our side bore back,

As a stream thwarted by the wind and sea

That meet it midway mouth to mouth, and beat

The flood back of its issue; but the king

Shouted against them, crying, O Father-

Source of the god my father, from thine hand

Send merchat end seems good now in thy sight,

But death from mine to this man; and the word

Quick on his lips yet like a blast or

Blew them together; and round its lords that met

Paused all the reeling battle: two main waves

Meeting, one hurled sheer from the seawall back That shocks it sideways, one right in from sea

Charging, that full in face takes at one blow

That whole recoil and ruin, with less fear Startle men's eyes late shipwrecked; for a breath

Crest fronting crest hung, wave to wave rose poised,

Then clashed, breaker to breaker; cloud with cloud

In heaven, chariot with chariot closed on earth,

One fourfold flash and thunder; yet a breath,

And with the king's spear through his red heart's root

Driven, like a rock split from its hillside, fell

Hurled under his own horsehoofs dead on earth

The sea-beast that made war on earth from sea,

Dumb, with no shrill note left of storming song,

Eumolpus; and his whole host with one stroke

Spear-stricken through its dense deep iron heart

Fell hurtling from us, and in fierce re-

Drew seaward as with one wide wail of waves,
Resorbed with reluctation; such a

groan Kose from the fluctuant refluence of its

Sucked sullen back and strengthless;

but scarce yet
The steeds had sprung, and wheels had
bruised their lord

Fallen, when from highest height of the sundering heaven

The Father for his brother's son's sake slain

Sent a sheer shaft of lightning writhen, and smote

Right on his son's son's forehead, that unhelmed

Shone like the star that shines down storm, and gave

Light to men's eyes that saw thy lord their king

Stand, and take breath from battle; then too soon

Saw sink down as a sunset in sea-mist The high bright head that here in van of the earth

Rose like a headland, and through storm and night

Took all the sea's wrath on it; and now dead

They bring thee back by war-forsaken ways

The strength called once thy bushand

The strength called once thy husband, the great guard

That was of all men, stay of all men's lives.

They bear him slain of no man, but a god,

Godlike; and toward him dead the city's gates

Fling their arms open mother-like, through him

Saved; and the whole clear land is purged of war.

What wilt thou say now of this weal and woe?

Praxithea. I praise the gots for

Athens. O sweet Earth, Mother, what joy thy soul has of the

Son,
Thy life of my dead lord, mine own soul knows

That knows thee godlike; and what grief should mine,

What sorrow should my heart have, who behold

Thee made so heaven-like happy This alone

I only of all these blessed, all thy kind, Crave this for blessing to me, that in theirs

Have but a part thus bitter; give me too

Death, and the sight of eyes that meet not mine.

And thee too from no godless heart or tongue

Reproachful, thee too by thy living

Father divine, merciful god, I call,

Spring of my life-springs, fountain of my stream,

Pure and poured forth to one great end with thine.

Sweet head sublime of triumph and these tears,

Cephisus, if thou seest as gladly shed Thy blood in mine as thine own waves are given

To do this great land good, to give for

The same lips drink, and comfort the same hearts.

Do thou then, O my father, whitesouled god,

To thy most pure earth-hallowing heart eterne

Take what thou gavest to be given for these,

Take thy child to thee; for her time is

full,
For all she hath borne she hath given,
seen all she had

Flow from her, from her eyes and breasts and hands

Flow forth to feed this people; but be thou,

thou, Dear god and gracious to all souls

alive,
Good to thine own seed also; let me

Father; my sleepless darkling day is done,

My day of life like night, but slumber-

less: For all my fresh fair springs, and his

that ran
In one stream's bed with mine, are all
run out

Into the deep of death. The gods have saved

Athens; my blood has bought her at their hand,

And ye sit safe; be glorious and be

As now for all time always, countrymen.

And love my dead forever; but me, me,

What shall man give for these so good as death?

Chorus. From the cup of my heart I pour through my lips along

The mingled wine of a joyful and sorrowful song;

Wine sweeter than honey and bitterer than blood that is poured

From the chalice of gold, from the point of the two-edged sword.

For the city redeemed should joy flow forth as a flood,

And a dirge make moan for the city polluted with blood.

Great praise should the gods have surely, my country, of thee,

Were thy brow but as white as of old for thy sons to see,

Were thy hands as bloodless, as blameless thy cheek divine; But a stain on it stands of the life-blood

But a stain on it stands of the life-blood offered for thine.

What thanks shall we give that are mixed not and marred with dread

For the price that has ransomed thine own with thine own child's head?

For a taint there cleaves to the people redeemed with blood,

And a plague to the blood-red hand.

The rain shall not cleanse it, the dew nor the sacred flood

That blesses the glad live land. In the darkness of earth beneath, in

the world without sun,
The shadows of past things reign;

And a cry goes up from the ghost of an ill deed done,

And a curse for a virgin slain.

Athena. Hear, men that mourn, and woman without mate,

Hearken; ye sick of soul with fear, and thou

Dumb-stricken for thy children; hear ye too,

Earth, and the glory of heaven, and winds of the air,

And the most holy heart of the deep sea,

Late wroth, now full of quiet; hear thou, sun,

Rolled round with the upper fire of rolling heaven,

And all the stars returning; hills and streams,

Springs and fresh fountains, day that seest these deeds,

Night that shalt hide not; and thou child of mine,

Child of a maiden, by a maid redeemed,

Blood-guiltless, though bought back with innocent blood,

City mine own: I Pallas bring thee word,

I virgin daughter of the most high god Give all you charge, and lay command on all,

The word I bring be wasted not; for this

The gods have stablished, and his soul hath sworn,

That time nor earth nor changing sons of man,

Nor waves of generations, nor the winds

Of ages risen and fallen that steer their tides

Through light and dark of birth and lovelier death

From storm toward haven inviolable, shall see

So great a light alive beneath the sun As the aweless eye of Athens; all fame

Shall be to her fame as a shadow in sleep

To this wide noon at waking; men most praised

In lands most happy for their children found

Shall hold as highest honors given of God

To be but likened to the least of thine, Thy least of all, my city; thine shall be

The crown of all songs sung, of all deeds done

Thine the full flower for all time; in

thine hand Shall time be like a sceptre, and thine

head head

Wear worship for a garland; nor one leaf

Shall change or winter cast out of thy crown

Till all flowers wither in the world; thine eyes

Shall first in man's flash lightning liberty,

Thy congue shall first say freedom; thy first hand

Shall loose the thunder terror as a hound

To hunt from sunset to the springs of the sun Kings that rose up out of the populous

Kings that rose up out of the populous east

To make their quarry of thee, and shall strew

With multitudinous limbs of myriad herds

The foodless pastures of the sea, and make

With wrecks immeasurable and unsummed defeat

One ruin of all their many-folded flocks Ill shepherded from Asia; by thy side Shall fight thy son the north wind, and the sea

That was thine enemy shall be sworn thy friend

And hand be struck in hand of his and thine

To hold faith fast for aye; with thee, though each

Make war on other, wind and sea shall keep

Peace, and take truce as brethren for thy sake

Leagued with one spirit and singlehearted strength

To break thy foes in pieces, who shall

meet
The wind's whole soul and might of the

main sea
Full in their face of battle, and become
A laughter to thee; like a shower of
leaves

Shall their long galleys, rank by staggering rank,

Be dashed adrift on ruin, and in thy sight

The sea deride them, and that lord of the air Who took by violent hand thy child to

wife With his loud lips bemock them, by his

breath
Swept out of sight of being; so great

a grace
Shall this day give thee, that makes one

in heart
With mine the deep sea's godhead, and

With mine the deep sea's godhead, and his son

With him that was thine helmsman, king with king, Dead man with dead; such only names as these

Shalt thou call royal, take none else or less

To hold of men in honor; but with me Shall these be worshipped as one god, and mix

With mine the might of their mysterious names

In one same shrine served singly, thence to keep

Perpetual guard on Athens; time and change,

Masters and lords of all men, shall be

To thee that knowest no master and no lord

Servants; the days that lighten heaven, and nights

That darken, shall be ministers of thine To attend upon thy glory, the great years

As light-engraven letters of thy name Writ by the sun's hand on the front of the earth

For world-beholden witness; such a

For one fair chaplet of three lives enwreathed

To hang forever from thy storied shrine, And this thy steersman fallen with tiller in hand

To stand forever at thy ship's helm seen, Shall he that bade their threefold flower be shorn

And laid him low that planted, give thee back

In sign of sweet land reconciled with

And heavenlike earth with heaven:

I daughter without mother born of God To the most woful mother born of man Plight for continual comfort. Hail, and live

Beyond all human hap of mortal doom Happy; for so my sire hath sworn and I.

Praxithea. O queen Athena! from a heart made whole

Take as thou givest us blessing; never tear

Shall stain for shame, nor groan untune the song

That as a bird shall spread and fold its wings

Here in thy praise forever, and fulfil
The whole world's crowning city
crowned with thee

As the sun's eye fulfils and crowns with

The circling crown of heaven. There is no grief

Great as the joy to be made one in will With him that is the heart and rule of life.

And thee, god born of god; thy name is ours,

And thy large grace more great than our desire.

Chorus. From the depth of the springs of my spirit a fountain is poured of thanksgiving,

My country, my mother, for thee, That thy dead for their death shall have life in thy sight and a name everliving

At heart of thy people to be.

In the darkness of change ont he waters of time they shall turn from afar To the beam of this dawn for a beacon,

the light of these pyres for a star.

They shall see thee who love and take

They shall see thee who love and take comfort, who hate thee shall see and take warning,

Our mother that makest us free; And the sons of thine earth shall have help of the waves that made war on their morning,

And friendship and fame of the sea.

## CHASTELARD: A TRAGEDY.

DEDICATE THIS PLAY, AS A PARTIAL EXPRESSION OF REVERENCE AND GRATITUDE, TO THE CHIEF OF LIVING POETS; TO THE FIRST DRAMATIST OF HIS AGE; TO THE GREATEST EXILE, AND THEREFORE TO THE GREATEST MAN OF FRANCE; TO VICTOR HUGO.

## PERSONS.

AARY STUART. IARY BEATON. AARY SEYTON. IARY CARMICHAEL. MARY HAMILTON. PIERRE DE BOSCOSEL DE CHASTELARD. DARNLEY. MURRAY.

RANDOLPH. MORTON. LINDSAY. FATHER BLACK. Guards, Burgesses, a Preacher, Citizens, etc.

Another VIe is there toward the Northe, in the See Occean, where that ben fulle cruele and ful vele Wommen of Nature: and thei han precious Stones in hire Eyen; and thei ben of that kynde, hat zif they beholden ony man, thei slen him anon with the beholdynge, as dothe the Basilisk. MAUNDEVILE'S Voiage and Travaile, Ch. xxviii.

## ACT I. MARY BEATON.

SCENE I .- The Upper Chamber in Holyrood.

The four MARIES.

Mary Beat in (sings): -

Le navire Est à l'eau; Entends rire Ce gros flot Que fait luire Et bruire Le vieux sire Aquilo.

Dans l'espace Du grand air Le vent passe Comme un fer Siffle et sonne, Tombe et tonne, Prend et donne A la mer.

3. Vois, la brise Tourne au nord, Et la bise Souffle et mord Sur ta pure Chevelure Oui murmure Et se tord.

Mary Hamilton, You never sing now but it makes you sad;

Why do you sing?

Mary Beaton. I hardly know well why;

It makes me sad to sing, and very sad To hold my peace.

Mary Carmichael. I know what saddens you.

Mary Beaton. Prithee, what? what? Mary Carmichael. Why, since we came from France.

You have no lover to make stuff for

songs.

Mary Beaton. You are wise; for there my pain begins indeed,

Because I have no lovers out of France. Mary Seyton. I mind me of one Olivier de Pesme,

(You knew him, sweet) a pale man with short hair,

Wore tied at sleeve the Beaton color. Mary Carmichael, Blue -

I know, blue scarfs. I never liked that knight.

Mary Hamilton. Me? I know him? I hardly knew his name.

Black, was his hair? no, brown. Mary Seyton. Light pleases you:

I have seen the time brown served you well enough.

Mary Carmichael. Lord Darnley's is a mere maid's yellow.

Mary Hamilton. No;

A man's, good color.

Mary Seyton. Ah, does that burn vour blood?

Why, what a bitter color is this red That fills your face! if you be not in love,

I am no maiden.

Mary Hamilton. Nay, God help true

I must be stabbed with love then, to the bone,

Yea, to the spirit, past cure.

Mary Seyton. What were you saying? I see some jest run up and down your lips.

Mary Carmichael. Finish your song; I know you have more of it;

Good sweet, I pray you do. Mary Beaton. I am too sad.

Mary Carmichael. This will not sadden you to sing; your song

Tastes sharp of sea and the sea's bitterness,

But small pain sticks on it.

Mary Beaton. Nay, it is sad;

For either sorrow with the beaten lips Because she got so many, and tore off

Sings not at all, or if it does get breath Sings quick and sharp like a hard sort of mirth:

And so this song does; or I would it did. That it might please me better than it does.

Mary Seyton. Well, as you choose then. What a sort of men

Crowd all about the squares!

Mary Carmichael. Ay, hateful men; For look how many talking mouths be there,

So many angers show their teeth at us. Which one is that, stooped somewhat in

the neck. That walks so with his chin against the wind,

Lips sideways shut? a keen-faced man — lo there,

He that walks midmost.

Mary Seyton. That is Master Knox. He carries all these folk within his skin. Bound up as 'twere between the brows of him

Like a bad thought; their hearts beat inside his;

They gather at his lips like flies in the

Thrust sides to catch his face.

Mary Carmichael. Look forth; so -The window - further - see you any

thing? Mary Hamilton. They are well gone;

but pull the lattice in, The wind is like a blade aslant. God

I could get back one day I think upon; The day we four and some six after us Sat in that Louvre garden and plucked fruits

To cast love-lots with in the gathered grapes;

This way: you shut your eyes, and reach and pluck,

And catch a lover for each grape you

I got but one, a green one, and it broke Between my fingers, and it ran down through them.

Mary Seyton. Ay, and the queen fell in a little wrath

Some of them she had plucked unwittingly —

She said, against her will. What fell to you?

Mary Beaton. Me? nothing but the stalk of a stripped bunch

With clammy grape-juice leavings at the tip.

Mary Carmichael. Ay, true, the queen came first, and she won all;
It was her bunch we took to cheat you

with.
What, will you weep for that now? for

you seem
As one that means to weep. God par-

don me!

I think your throat is choking up with tears.

You are not well, sweet, for a lying jest

To take you this much.

Mary Beaton. I am well enough:
Give not your pity trouble for my sake.
Mary Seyton. If you be well, sing out
your song and laugh,

Though it were but to fret the fellows there. —

Now shall we catch her secret washed and wet

In the middle of her song; for she must weep

If she sing through.

ered

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fell

e of

Mary Hamilton. I told you it was love;

watched her eyes all through the masquing time

Feed on his face by morse's; she must weep.

Mary Beaton (sings): -

Le navire
Passe et luit,
Puis chavire
À grand bruit;
Et sur l'onde
La plus blonde
Tête au monde
Flotte et fuit.

Moi, je rame, Et l'amour C'est ma flamme, Mon grand jour, Ma chandelle Blanche et belle, Ma chapelle De séjour.

6

Toi, mon âme
Et ma foi,
Sois ma dame
Et ma loi;
Sois ma mie,
Sois Marie,
Sois ma vie,
Toute à moi!

Mary Seyton. I know the song; a song of Chastelard's

He made in coming over with the queen. How hard it rained! he played that over twice,

Sitting before her, singing each word soft,

As if he loved the least she listened to Mary Hamilton. No marvel if he loved it for her sake;

She is the choice of women in the world, Is she not, sweet?

Mary Beaton. I have seen no fairer one.

Mary Seyton. And the most loving: did you note last night

How long she held him with her hands and eyes,

Looking a little sadly, and at last Kissed him below the chin, and parted so

As the dance ended?

Mary Hamilton. This was courtesy;
So might I kies my singing hird's red hill

So might I kiss my singing-bird's red bill After some song, till he bit short my lip. Mary Seyton. But if a lady hold her bird anights

To sing to her between her fingers — ha? I have seen such birds.

Mary Carmichael. Oh, you talk empti-

She is full of grace; and marriage in good time

Will wash the fool called scandal off men's lips.

Mary Hamilton. I know not that; I know how folk would gibe

If one of us pushed courtesy so far. She has always loved love's fashions well; you wot,

The marshal, head friend of this Chaste-

lard's,

She used to talk with ere he brought her here,

And sow their talk with little kisses thick

As roses in rose-harvest. For myself, I cannot see which side of her that lurks

Which snares in such wise all the sense of men;

What special beauty, subtle as man's

eye And tender as the inside of the eyelid is,

There grows about her.

Mary Carmichael. I think her cunning speech —

The soft and rapid shudder of her breath

In talking—the rare, tender little laugh—

The pitiful sweet sound like a bird's sigh

When her voice breaks; her talking does it all.

Mary Seyton. I say, her eyes with those clear perfect brows:

It is the playing of those eyelashes, The lure of amorous looks as sad as

Plucks all souls toward her like a net.

Mary Hamilton. What, what!

You praise her in too lover-like a wise For women that praise women; such report

Is like robes worn the rough side next the skin,

Frets where it warms.

Mary Seyton. You think too much in French.

Enter DARNLEY.

Here comes your thorn; what glove against it now?

Mary Hamilton. Oh, God's good pity! this a thorn of mine?

It has not run deep in yet.

Mary Carmichael. I am not sure: The red runs over to your face's edge.

Darnley. Give me one word; nay, lady, for love's sake;

Here, come this way; I will not keep you; no.

-O my sweet soul, why do you wrong me thus?

Mary Hamilton. Why will you give me for men's eyes to burn?

Darnley. What, sweet, I love you as mine own soul loves me;

They shall divide when we do.

Mary Hamilton. I cannot say.

Darnley. Why, look you, I am broken with the queen;

This is the rancor and the bitter heart That grows in you, by God it is naught else.

Why, this last night she held me for a fool—

Ay, God wot, for a thing of stripe and bell.

I bade her make me marshal in her masque—

I had the dress here painted, gold and

(That is, not gray, but a blue green like this)—

She tells me she had chosen her marshal, she,

The best o' the world for cunning and sweet wit;

And what sweet fool but her sweet knight, God help!

To serve her with that three-inch wit of his?

She is all fool and fiddling now: for me,

I am well pleased; God knows, if I might choose

I would not be more troubled with her love.

Her love is like a brier that rasps the flesh,

And yours is soft like flowers. Come this way, love;

So, further in this window: hark you here.

Enter CHASTELARD.

Mary Beaton. Good morrow, sir. Chastelard. Good morrow, noble lady. Mary Carmichael. You have heard

no news? what news? Chastelard. Nay, I have none.

That maiden-tongued male-faced Elizabeth

Hath eyes unlike our queen's, hair not so soft,

And hands more sudden save for court-

And lips no kiss of love's could bring to flower

In such red wise as our queen's; save this news,

I know none English.

Mary Seyton. Come, no news of her; For God's love talk still rather of our queen.

Mary Beaton. God give us grace then to speak well of her.

You did right joyfully in our masque last night;

I saw you when the queen lost breath (her head

Bent back, her chin and lips catching the air—

A goodly thing to see her) how you smiled

Across her head, between your lips —

You had great joy, sir. Did not you take note

Once how one lock fell? that was good to see.

Chastelard. Yea, good enough to live for.

Mary Beaton. Nay, but sweet

Enough to die. When she broke off the dance,

Turning round short and soft — I never sawSuch supple ways of walking as she has.

Chastelard. Why do you praise her gracious looks to me?

Mary Beaton. Sir, for mere sport; but tell me even for love

How much you love her.

Chastelard. I know not: it may be
If I had set mine eyes to find that out,
I should not know it. She hath fair
eyes: may be

I love her for sweet eyes or brows or

For the smooth temples, where God touching her

Made blue with sweeter veins the flowersweet white;

Or for the tender turning of her wrist, Or marriage of the eyelid with the cheek;

I cannot tell; or flush of lifting throat, I know not if the color get a name

This side of heaven — no man knows; or her mouth,

A flower's lip with a snake's lip, stinging sweet,

And sweet to sting with: face that one would see

And then fall blind and die with sight

Held fast between the eyelids — oh, all

And all her body and the soul to that, The speech and shape and hand and

foot and heart
That I would die of—yea, her name
that turns

My face to fire being written — I know no whit

How much I love them.

Mary Beaton. Nor how she loves you back?

Chastelard. I know her ways of loving, all of them:

A sweet soft way the first is; afterward It burns and bites like fire; the end of that,

Charred dust, and eyelids bitten through with smoke.

Mary Beaton. What has she done for you to gird at her?

Chastelard. Nothing. You do not greatly love her, you,

Who do not — gird, you call it. I am bound to France;

Shall I take word from you to any one? So it be harmless, not a gird, I will.

Mary Beaton. I doubt you will not go hence with your life.

Chastelard. Why, who should slay me? no man northwards born,

In my poor mind; my sword's lip is no maid's

To fear the iron biting of their own, Though they kiss hard for hate's sake.

Mary Beaton. Lo you, sir,

How sharp he whispers, what close breath and eyes—

And hers are fast upon him, do you see? Chastelard. Well, which of these must take my life in hand?

Pray God it be the better: nay, which hand?

Mary Beaton. I think, none such.
The man is goodly made;

She is tender-hearted toward his courtesies,

And would not have them fall too low to find.

Look, they slip forth.

[Exeunt DARNLEY and MARY HAMIL-

Mary Seyton. For love's sake, after them,

And soft as love can.

[Exeunt MARY CARMICHAEL and MARY SEYTON.

Chastelard. True, a goodly man.
What shapeliness and state he hath,
what eyes,

Brave brow and lordly lip! were it not fit

Great queens should love him?

Mary Beaton. See you now, fair lord,
I have but scant breath's time to help

myself, And I must cast my heart out on a

chance; So bear with me. That we twain have loved well.

I have no heart nor wit to say; God wot We had never made good lovers, you

and I.

Look you, I would not have you love
me, sir,

For all the love's sake in the world. I

You love the queen, and loving burns you up,

And mars the grace and joyous wit you had,

Turning your speech to sad, your face to strange, Your mirth to nothing: and I am pite-

ous, I,

Even as the queen is, and such women

even as the queen is, and such women

And if I helped you to your love-longing,
Meseems some grain of love might fall

my way, And love's god help me when I came

And love's god help me when I came to love:

I have read tales of men that won their loves

On some such wise.

Chastelard. If you mean mercifully,

I am bound to you past thought and thank; if worse,

I will but thank your lips and not your heart.

Mary Beaton. Nay, let love wait, and praise me, in God's name,

Some day when he shall find me; yet, God wot,

My lips are of one color with my heart. Withdraw now from me, and about midnight

In some close chamber without light or noise

It may be I shall get you speech of her; She loves you well; it may be she will speak,

I wot not what; she loves you at her heart.

Let her not see that I have given you word.

Lest she take shame and hate her love.
Till night.

Let her not see it.

Chastelard. I will not thank you now, And then I'll die what sort of death you will.

Farewell. | Exit.

Mary Beaton. And by God's mercy
and my love's

I will find ways to earn such thank of you. [Exit.

Scene II. - A Hall in the same.

The Queen, Darnley, Murray, Ran-DOLPH, the Maries, Chastelard, etc.

Queen. Hath no man seen my lord of Chastelard?

Nay, no great matter. Keep you on that side:

Begin the purpose.

Mary Carmichael. Madam, he is here. Queen. Begin a measure now that other side.

I will not dance; let them play soft a little.

Fair sir, we had a dance to tread tonight,

To teach our north folk all sweet ways of France;

But at this time we have no heart to it

Sit, sir, and talk. Look, this breastclasp is new,

The French king sent it me. Chastelard. A goodly thing:

But what device? the word is ill to catch.

Queen. A Venus crowned, that eats
the hearts of men:

Below her flies a love with a bat's wings, And strings the hair of paramours to

bind

Live birds' feet with. Lo what small subtle work:

The smith's name, Gian Crisostomo da — what?

Can you read that? The sea froths

underfoot;

She stands upon the sea, and it curls up in soft loose curls that run to one in the wind.

But her hair is not shaken, there's a fault:

It lies straight down in close-cut points

and tongues,
Not like blown hair. The legend is

writ small:

Still one makes out this — Cave — if you look.

Chastelard. I see the Venus well enough, God wot,

But nothing of the legend. Queen. Come, fair lord,

Shall we dance now? my heart is good again. [They dance a measure. Darnley. I do not like this manner of a dance,

This game of two by two; it were much

To meet between the changes and to

Than still to keep apart and whispering Each lady out of earshot with her friend.

Mary Beaton. That's as the lady

serves her knight, I think:

We are broken up too much.

Darnley. Nay, no such thing;

Be not wroth, lady, I wot it was the queen

Pricked each his friend out. Look you now—your ear—

If love had gone by choosing — how they laugh,

Lean lips together, and wring hands underhand!

What, you look white too, sick of heart, ashamed,

No marvel — for men call it — hark you though — [They pass.

Murray. Was the Queen found no merrier in France?

Mary Hamilton. Why, have you seen her sorrowful to-night?

Murray. I say not so much; blithe she seems at whiles,

Gentle and goodly doubtless in all ways, But hardly with such lightness and quick

heart As it was said.

Mary Hamilton. 'Tis your great care of her

Makes you misdoubt; naught else.

Murray. Yea, may be so;

She has no cause I know to sadden her.

[They pass.

Queen. I am tired too soon; I could have danced down hours

Two years gone hence, and felt no wearier.

One grows much older northwards, my fair lord;

I wonder men die south; meseems all France

Smells sweet with living, and bright breath of days

That keep men far from dying. Peace; pray you now,

No dancing more. Sing, sweet, and make us mirth;

We have done with dancing measures sing that song

You call the song of love at ebb.

Mary Beaton (sings).

Ι.

Between the sunset and the sea
My love laid hands and lips on me;
Of sweet came sour, of day came night,
Of long desire came brief delight:
Ah, love, and what thing came of thee
Between the sea-downs and the sea?

2.

Between the sea-mark and the sea Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me; Love turned to tears, and tears to fire, And dead delight to new desire; Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to be Between the sea-sand and the sea.

3.

Between the sundown and the sea Love watched one hour of love with me; Then down the all-golden water-ways His feet flew after yesterdays; I saw them come and saw them flee Between the sea-foam and the sea.

4.

Between the sea-strand and the sea Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me; The first star saw twain turn to one Between the moonrise and the sun; The next, that saw not love, saw me Between the sea-banks and the sea.

Queen. Lo, sirs,

What mirth is here! Some song of yours, fair lord;

You know glad ways of rhyming — no such tunes

As go to tears.

Chastelard. I made this yesterday;
For its love's sake I pray you let it
live. [He sings.

Τ.

Après tant de jours, après tant de pleurs, Soyez secourable à mon âme en peine. Voyez comme Avril fait l'amour aux feurs:

Dame d'amour, dame aux beiles cou-

Dieu vous a fait belle, Amour vous fait reine.

\_

Rions, je t'en prie; aimons, je le veux. Le temps fuit et rit et ne revient guère. Pour baiser le bout de tes blonds cheveux, Pour baiser tes cils, ta bouche et tes yeux; L'amour n'a qu'un jour auprès de sa mère.

Queen. 'Tis a true song; love shall not pluck time back,

Nor time lie down with love. For me, I am old;

Have you no hair changed since you changed to Scot?

I look each day to see my face drawn up

About the eyes, as if they sucked the cheeks.

I think this air and face of things here north

Puts snow at flower-time in the blood, and tears

Between the sad eyes and the merry

Between the sad eyes and the merry mouth

In their youth-days.

Chastelard. It is a bitter air.

Queen. Faith, if I might be gone, sir, would I stay?

I think, for no man's love's sake.

Chastelard. I think not.

Queen. Do you not mind at landing how the quay

Looked like a blind wet face in waste of wind

And washing of wan waves? how the hard mist

Made the hills ache? Your songs lied loud, my knight:

They said my face would burn off cloud and rain

Seen once, and fill the crannied land with fire,

Kindle the capes in their blind blackgray hoods — I know not what. You praise me past

all loves; And these men love me little; 'tis some

fault,

I think, to love me: even a fool's sweet

fault.

I have your verse still beating in my

head,
Of how the swallow got a wing broken

In the springtime, and lay upon his side

Watching the rest fly off i' the red leaftime,

And broke his heart with grieving at himself

Before the snow came. Do you know that lord

With sharp-set eyes? and him with huge thewed throat?

Good friends to me; I had need love them well.

Why do you look one way? I will not have you

Keep your eyes here: 'tis no great wit

To care much now for old French friends of mine. -

Come, a fresh measure; come, play well for me,

Fair sirs, your playing puts life in foot

and heart. -Darnley. Lo you again, sirs, how she

laughs and leans, Holding him fast - the supple way she

hath!

Your queen hath none such; better as she is

For all her measures, a grave English maid,

Than queen of snakes and Scots. Randolph. She is over-fair

To be so sweet, and hurt not. A good knight;

Goodly to look on.

Murray. Yea, a good sword too, And of good kin; too light of loving

though; These jangling song-smiths are keen love-mongers,

They snap at all meats.

Darnley. What! by God I think,

For all his soft French face and bright boy's sword,

There be folks fairer: and for knightliness,

These hot-lipped brawls of Paris breed sweet knights, -

Mere stabbers for a laugh across the wine. -

Queen. There, I have danced you down for once, fair lord;

Wou look pale now. Nay then for courtesy I must needs help you; do not bow

your head, I am tall enough to reach close under

it.

Kisses him. Now come, we'll sit and see this pas-

sage through. — Darnley. A courtesy, God help us! courtesy -

Pray God it wound not where it should heal wounds.

Why, there was here last year some lord of France

(Priest on the wrong side as some folk are prince)

Told tales of Paris ladies - nay, by God.

No jest for queen's lips to catch laughter of

That would keep clean; I wot he made good mirth,

But she laughed over sweetly, and in such wise -

Nav. I laughed too, but lothly. —

Queen. How they look!

The least thing courteous galls them to the bone. What would one say now I were think-

ing of? Chastelard. It seems, some sweet thing.

Queen. True, a sweet one, sir, -

That madrigal you made Alys de Saulx Of the three ways of love; the first kiss honor,

The second pity, and the last kiss love. Which think you now was that I kissed you with?

Chastelard. It should be pity, if you be pitiful:

For I am past all honoring that keep Outside the eye of battle, where my kin

Fallen overseas have found this many a day

No helm of mine between them; and for love.

I think of that as dead men of good days

Ere the wrong side of death was theirs, when God

Was friends with them.

Queen. Good; call it pity, then.

You have a subtle riddling skill at love Which is not like a lover. For my part,

I am resolved to be well done with love,

Though I were fairer-faced than all the world;

As there be fairer. Think you, fair my knight,

Love shall live after life in any man? I have given you stuff for riddles.

Chastelard. Most sweet queen,

They say men dying remember, with sharp joy

And rapid reluctation of desire,

Some old thing, some swift breath of wind, some word,

Some sword-stroke or dead lute-strain, some lost sight,

Some sea-blossom stripped to the sun and burned

At naked ebb—some river-flower that breathes

Against the stream like a swooned swimmer's mouth —

Some tear or laugh ere lip and eye were man's —

Sweet stings that struck the blood in riding - nay,

Some garment or sky-color or spicesmell,

And die with heart and face shut fast on it,

And know not why, and weep not: it may be

Men shall hold love fast always in such wise

In new fair lives where all are new things else,

And know not why, and weep not. Queen. A right rhyme;

And right a rhyme's worth: nay, a sweet song, though.

What! shall my cousin hold fast that love of his,

Her face and talk, when life ends? as God grant

His life end late and sweet! I love him well.

She is fair enough, his lover; a fair-faced maid,

With gray sweet eyes and tender touch of talk;

And that, God wot, I wist not. See you, sir,

Men say I needs must get wed hastily;

Do none point lips at him?

Chastelard. Yea, guessingly.

Queen. God help such lips! and get
me leave to laugh!

What should I do but paint and put him up.

Like a gilt god, a saintship in a shrine,

For all fools' feast? God's mercy on men's wits!

Tall as a housetop and as bare of brain—

I'll have no staffs with fool-faced carver heads

To hang my life on. Nay, for love, no more,

For fear I laugh and set their eyes on

edge
To find out why I laugh. Good night,

fair lords;
Bid them cease playing. Give me your hand; good night.

Scene III. — Mary Beaton's Chamber: night.

Enter CHASTELARD.

Chastelard. I am not certain yet she will not come;

For I can feel her hand's heat still in mine,

Past doubting of, and see her brows half drawn,

And half a light in the eyes. If she come not,

I am no worse than he that dies tonight.

This two years' patience gets an end at least,

Whichever way I am well done with it. How hard the thin sweet moon is, split and laced

And latticed over, just a stray of it

Catching and clinging at a strip of wall, Hardly a hand's-breadth. Did she turn indeed

In going out? not to catch up her gown The page let slip, but to keep sight of me?

There was a soft small stir beneath her

Hard to put on, a quivering of her blood

That knew of the old nights watched out wakefully.

Those measures of her dancing too were changed—

More swift and with more eager stops at whiles

And rapid pauses where breath failed her lips.

Enter MARY BEATON.

Oh, she is come: if you be she indeed, Let me but hold your hand; what! no word vet?

You turn and kiss me without word; O

sweet!

If you will slay me, be not over-quick, Kill me with some slow heavy kiss that plucks

The heart out at the lips. Alas! sweet

love,

Give me some old sweet word to kiss

Is it a jest? for I can feel your hair Touch me - I may embrace your body

I know you well enough without sweet words.

How should one make you speak? This is not she.

Come in the light; nay, let me see your

eyes. Ah, you it is? what have I done to you? And do you look now to be slain for this That you twist back and shudder like

one stabbed? Mary Beaton. Yea, kill me now, and

do not look at me:

God knows I meant to die. Sir, for God's love,

Kill me now quick ere I go mad with

shame! Chastelard. Cling not upon my wrists:

let go the hilt: Nay, you will bruise your hand with it.

Stand up;

You shall not have my sword forth. Mary Beaton. Kill me now,

I will not rise: there, I am patient, see. I will not strive, but kill me for God's

Chastelard. Pray you, rise up, and be not shaken so:

Forgive me my rash words, my heart was gone

the thing you were: be not After ashamed:

Give me the shame, you have no part

Can I not say a word shall do you good? Forgive that too.

Mary Beaton. I shall run crazed with

shame.

But when I felt your lips catch hold on mine,

It stopped my breath: I would have told you all.

Let me go out; you see I lied to you, And I am shamed; I pray you, loose me, sir,

Let me go out.

Cnastelard. Think no base things of

I were most base to let you go ashamed. Think my heart's love and honor go with you:

Yea, while I live, for your love's noble

I am your servant in what wise may be, To love and serve you with right thankful heart.

Mary Beaton. I have given men leave to mock me, and must bear

What shame they please: you have good cause to mock.

Let me pass now.

Chastelard. You know I mock you

If ever I leave off to honor you,

God give me shame! I were the worst churl born.

Mary Beaton. No marvel though the queen should love you too,

Being such a knight. I pray you for her love,

Lord Chastelard, of your great courtesy, Think now no scorn to give me my last kiss

That I shall have of man before I die. Even the same lips you kissed and knew not of

Will you kiss now, knowing the shame of them,

And say no one word to me afterwards, That I may see I have loved the best lover

And man most courteous of all men alive?

Mary Seyton (within). Here, fetch the light: nay, this way; enter all.

Mary Beaton. I am twice undone Fly, get some hiding, sir;

They have spied upon me somehow. Chastelard. Nay, fear not;

Stand by my side.

Enter MARY SEYTON and MARY HAMILTON. Mary Hamilton. Give me that light:

this way.

Chastelard. What jest is here, fair ladies? it walks late,

Something too late for laughing.

Mary Seyton. Nay, fair sir,

What jest is this of yours? Look to your lady: She is nigh swooned. The queen shall

know all this.

Mary Hamilton. A grievous shame it is we are fallen upon;

Hold forth the light. Is this your care of us?

Nay, come, look up: this is no game, God wot. Chastelard. Shame shall befall them

that speak shamefully: I swear this lady is as pure and

As any maiden, and who believes me

Shall keep the shame for his part and the lie. To them that come in honor and not in

I will make answer. - Lady, have good

Give me the light there: I will see you forth.

## ACT II. - DARNLEY.

Scene I. - The great Chamber in Holyrood.

The QUEEN and MARY SEYTON.

Queen. But will "ou swear it? Mary Seyton. Swear it, madam? Queen. Ay -

Swear it.

Mary Seyton. Madam, I am not friends with them.

Queen. Swear then against them if you are not friends.

Mary Seyton. Indeed I saw them kiss.

Queen. So lovers use -

What, their mouths close? a goodly Assuredly I'll see him. I am not way of love l

Or but the hands? or on her throat! Prithee -

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You have sworn that.

Mary Seyton. I say what I saw done. Queen. Ay, you did see her cheeks (God smite them red !)

Kissed either side? what, they must eat strange food,

Those singing lips of his?

Mary Seyton. Sweet meat enough -They started at my coming five yards off,

But there they were.

Queen. A maid may have kissed cheeks And no shame in them - yet one would

not swear. You have sworn that. Pray God he be not mad:

A sickness in his eyes. The left side

(I was told that) and the right cour-

'Tis good fools' fashion. What! no more but this?

For me, God knows I am no whit wroth, - not I;

But, for your fame's sake that her shame will sting,

I cannot see a way to pardon her, —

For your fame's sake, lest that be prated of.

Mary Seyton. Nay, if she were not chaste - I have not said

She was not chaste.

Queen. I know you are tender of

And your sweet word will hardly turn her sweet.

Mary Seyton. Indeed I would fain do her any good.

Shall I not take some gracious word to her?

Queen. Bid her not come or wait on me to-day.

Mary Seyton. Will you see him? Queen. See - oh, this Chastelard?

He doth not well to sing maids into shame;

And folk are sharp here; yet for sweet friends' sake

wroth.

A goodly man, and a good sword thereto -

It may be he shall wed her. I am not wroth.

Mary Seyton. Nay, though she bore with him, she hath no great love, I doubt me, that way.

Queen. God mend all, I pray -

And keep us from all wrong-doing and wild words.

I think there is no fault men fall upon But I could pardon. Look you, I would swear

She were no paramour for any man,

So well I love her.

Mary Seyton. Am I to bid him in? Queen. As you will, sweet. But if you held me hard

You did me grievous wrong. Doth he wait there?

Men call me over-tender; I had rather

Than too ungracious. - Father, what with you?

Enter FATHER BLACK.

Father Black. God's peace and health of soul be with the queen!

And pardon be with me though I speak truth.

As I was going on peaceable men's Through your good town, desiring no

man harm, A kind of shameful woman with thief's

Spake somewhat to me over a thrust-

out chin, Soliciting as I deemed an alms; which

alms (Remembering what was writ of Magdalen)

I gave not grudging but with pure good heart.

When lo! some scurril children that lurked near,

Set there by Satan for my stumblingstone,

Fell hooting with necks thwart and eyes a-squint,

Screeched and made horns and shot out tongues at me, -

As at my Lord the Jews shot out their tongues,

And made their heads wag; I considering this

Took up my cross in patience, and passed forth:

Nevertheless one ran between my feet,

And made me totter, using speech and signs

I smart with shame to think of: then my blood

Kindled, and I was moved to smite the knave.

And the knave howled; whereat the lewd whole herd

Brake forth upon me, and cast mire and stones,

So that I ran sore risk of bruise or gash

If they had touched; likewise I heard men say,

(Their foul speech missed not of mine ear) they cried,

"This devil's mass-priest hankers for new flesh

Like a dry hound; let him seek such at home,

Snuff and smoke out the queen's French" -

Queen. They said that?

Father Black. "— French paramours that breed more shames than sons

All her court through;" forgive me. Queen. With my heart.

Father, you see the hatefulness of these —

They loathe us for our love. I am not moved:

What should I do being angry? By this hand

(Which is not big enough to bruise their lips), I marvel what thing should be done

with me

To make me wroth. We must have patience with us

When we seek thank of men.

Father Black. Madam, farewell;

I pray God keep you in such patient heart.

Queen. Let him come now. Mary Seyton. Madain, he is at hand.

Enter CHASTELARD.

Exit

Queen. Give me that broidery-frame; how, gone so soon? No maid about? Reach me some skein of silk.

What! are you come, fair lord? Now

by my life
That lives here idle, I am right glad of

you,

20

I have slept so well and sweet since yesternight
It seems our dancing put me in glad

heart.
Did you sleep well?

Chastelard. Yea, as a man may sleep. Queen. You smile as if I jested; do not men

Sleep as we do? Had you fair dreams in the night?

For me—but I should fret you with

my dreams —
I dreamed sweet things. You are good at soothsaying:

Make me a sonnet of my dream.

Chastelard. I will, When I shall know it.

Queen. I thought I was asleep
In Paris, lying by my lord, and knew
In some wise he was well awake, and yet
I could not wake too; and I seemed to
know

He hated me, and the least breath I

made

Would turn somehow to slay or stifle me. Then in brief time he rose and went

away, Saying, Let her dream, but when her

dream is out

I will come back and kill her as she wakes. And I lay sick and trembling with sore fear,

And still I knew that I was deep asleep; And thinking, I must dream now, or I die,

God send me some good dream lest I be slain!

Fell fancying one had bound my feet with cords.

And bade me dance, and the first measure made

I fell upon my face, and wept for pain; And my cords broke, and I began the dance To a bitter tune; and he that danced with me
Was clothed in black with long red lines and bars.

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And masked down to the lips, but by the chin

I knew you though your lips were sewn up close

With scarlet thread all dabbled wet in blood.

And then I knew the dream was not for

good. And striving with sore travail to reach up And kiss you (you were taller in my

I missed your lips, and woke.

Chastelard. Sweet dreams, you said? An evil dream I hold it for, sweet love. Oueen. You call love sweet; yea, what

is bitter, then?
There's nothing broken sleep could hit

upon

dream)

So bitter as the breaking down of love You call me sweet; I am not sweet to you,

Nor you — O, I would say not sweet to me,

And if I said so I should hardly lie.
But there have been those things between us, sir.

That men call sweet.

Chastelard. I know not how There is Turns to There hath been; 'tis a heavier change

Than change of flesh to dust. Yet, though years change,

And good things end, and evil things

The old love that was, or that was

dreamed about, That sang and kissed and wept upon

itself,
Laughed and ran mad with love of its
own face,

That was a sweet thing.

Queen. Nay, I know not well. 'Tis when the man is held fast under-

This when the man is held fast underground

They say for sooth what manner of heart he had.

We are alive, and cannot be well sure If we loved much or little: think you not It were convenient one of us should die? Chastelard. Madam, your speech is harsh to understand.

Queen. Why, there could come no change then; one of us

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Would never need to fear our love might turn

To the sad thing that it may grow to be.

I would sometimes all things were dead asleep

That I have loved, all buried in soft beds

And sealed with dreams and visions,

and each dawn

Sung to by sorrows, and all night

assuaged
By short sweet kisses and by sweet

long loves

For old life's sake, lest weeping overmuch

Should wake them in a strange new time, and arm

Memory's blind hand to kill forgetful ness.

Chastelard. Look, you dream still, and sadly.

Queen. Sooth, a dream;

For such things died or lied in sweet love's face,

And I forget them not, God help my wit!

I would the whole world were made up

of sleep
And life not fashioned out of lies and

loves.
We foolish women have such times, you

know,
When we are weary or afraid or sick

For perfect nothing.

Chastelard (aside). Now would one be fain

To know what bitter or what dangerous thing

She thinks of, softly chafing her soft lip. She must mean evil.

Queen. Are you sad, too, sir,

That you say nothing?

Chastelard. I? not sad a jo

Chastelard. I? not sad a jot— Though this your talk might make a

blithe man sad.

Queen. O me! I must not let stray sorrows out;

They are ill to fledge, and if they feel blithe air

They wail and chirp untunefully. Would God

I had been a man! when I was born, men say, My father turned his face and wept to

think

I was no man.

Chastelard. Will you weep, too? Queen. In sooth,

If I were man I should be no base man;
I could have fought; yea, I could fight

now, too,
If men would show me; I would I were

the king!
I should be all ways better than I am.

Chastelard. Nay, would you have more honor, having this —

Men's hearts and loves and the sweet spoil of souls

Given you like simple gold to hind

Given you like simple gold to bind your hair? Say you were king of thews, not queen

of souls, An iron headpiece hammered to a head,

You might fail, too.

Queen. No, then I would not fail,

Or God should make me woman back again.

To be King James — you hear men say
King James,

The word sounds like a piece of gold thrown down,

Rings with a round and royal note in it —
A name to write good record of; this
king

Fought here and there, was beaten such a day,

And came at last to a good end, his life Being all lived out, and for the main part well

And like a king's life; then to have men say

(As now they say of Flodden, here they broke

And there they held up to the end) years back

They saw you — yea, I saw the king's

face helmed

Red in the hot lit foreground of somt

fight

Hold the whole war as it were by the bit a horse

Fit for his knees' grip - the great rearing war

That frothed with lips flung up, and shook men's lives

Off either flank of it like snow; I saw (You could not hear as his sword rang), saw him

Shout, laugh, smite straight, and flaw the riven ranks.

Move as the wind moves, and his horse's

Stripe their long flags with dust. Why, if one died,

To die so in the heart and heat of war Were a much goodlier thing than living

And speaking sweet for fear of men. Woe's me!

Is there no way to pluck this body off? Then I should never fear a man again, Even in my dreams I should not; no, by heaven.

Chastelard. I never thought you did fear any thing.

Queen. God knows I do; I could be sick with wrath

To think what grievous fear I have 'twixt whiles

Of mine own self and of base men. Last night

If certain lords were glancing where I

Under the eyelid, with sharp lip and

I tell you, for pure shame and fear of them. I could have gone and slain them.

Chastelard. Verily,

You are changed since those good days that fell in France;

But yet I think you are not so changed at heart

As to fear man.

Queen. I would I had no need.

Lend me your sword a little: a fair sword,

I see the fingers that I hold it with Clear in the blade, bright pink, the

shell-color, Brighter than flesh is really, curved all

Now men would mock if I should wear it here,

Bound under bosom with a girdle, here,

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And yet I have heart enough to wear it well.

Speak to me like a woman, let me see If I can play at man.

Chastelard. God save King James! Queen. Would you could change

now! Fie, this will not do: Unclasp your sword; nay, the hilt hurts my side;

It sticks fast here. Unbind this knot for me: Stoop, and you'll see it closer; thank

you: there. Now I can breathe, sir. Ah! it hurts me, though:

This was fool's play.

Chastelard. Yea, you are better so, Without the sword; your eyes are stronger things,

Whether to save or slay. Queen. Alas, my side!

It hurts right sorely. Is it not pitiful Our souls should be so bound about with flesh

Even when they leap and smite with wings and feet,

The least pain plucks them back, puts out their eyes,

Turns them to tears and words? Ah, my sweet knight, You have the better of us that weave

and weep While the blithe battle blows upon

your eyes Like rain and wind; yet I remember too

When this last year the fight at Corrichie

Reddened the rushes with stained fenwater,

I rode with my good men, and took delight, Feeling the sweet clear wind upon my

And rainy soft smells blown upon my

face In riding: then the great fight jarred

and joined, And the sound stung me right through

heart and all; For I was here, see, gazing off the hills, In the wet air; our housings were all

And not a plume stood stiffly past the

But flapped between the bridle and the neck:

And under us we saw the battle go Like running water; I could see by

Some helm the rain fell shining off,

some flag Snap from the staff, shorn through or broken short

In the man's falling: yea, one seemed to catch

The very grasp of tumbled men at

Teeth clinched in throats, hands riveted in hair,

Tearing the life out with no help of swords.

And all the clamor seemed to shine, the light

Seemed to shout as a man doth; twice I laughed —

I tell you, twice my heart swelled out with thirst

To be into the battle; see, fair lord, I swear it seemed I might have made a knight,

And yet the simple bracing of a belt Makes me cry out; this is too pitiful, This dusty half of us made up with fears. —

Have you been ever quite so glad to fight As I have thought men must? pray

you, speak truth. Chastelard. Yea, when the time came,

there caught hold of me Such pleasure in the head and hands and blood

As may be kindled under loving lips: Crossing the ferry once to the Clerk's Field,

I mind me how the plashing noise of

Put fire into my face for joy, and how My blood kept measure with the swinging boat

Till we touched land, all for the sake of that

Which should be soon.

Queen. Her name, for God's love,

You slew your friend for love's sake? nay, the name.

Chastelard. Faith, I forget. Queen. Now by the faith I have

You have no faith to swear by. Chastelard. A good sword:

We left him quiet after a thrust or twain.

Queen. I would I had been at hand, and marked them off

As the maids did when we played singing games:

You outwent me at rhyming; but for faith.

We fight best there. I would I had seen you fight.

Chastelard. I would you had; his play was worth an eye;

He made some gallant way before that

Which made me way through him. Oueen. Would I saw that!

How did you slay him?

Chastelard. A clean pass — this way; Right in the side here, where the blood has root.

His wrist went round in pushing, see you, thus,

Or he had pierced me.

Queen. Yea, I see, sweet knight. I have a mind to love you for his sake;

Would I had seen!

Chastelard. Hugues de Marsillac — I have the name now; 'twas a goodly one

Before he changed it for a dusty name. Queen:. Talk not of death; I would hear living talk

Of good live swords and good strokes struck withal,

Brave battles and the mirth of mingling

Not of cold names you greet a dead man with.

You are yet young for fighting; but in fight

Have you never caught a wound?

Chastelard. Yea, twice or so:

The first time, in a little outlying field (My first field) at the sleepy gray of dawn,

They found us drowsy, fumbling at our girths,

And rode us down by heaps; I took a

Here in the shoulder.

Queen. Ah, I mind well now; Did you not ride a day's space afterward.

ward, Having two wounds? yea, Dandelot it

That Dandelot took word of it.

Sitting at meat when the news came to

I had nigh swooned but for those Florence eyes

Slanting my way with sleek lids drawn up close —

Yea, and she said, the Italian brokeress, She said such men were good for great queens' love.

I would you might die, when you come to die.

Like a knight slain. Pray God we make good ends.

For love too, love dies hard or easily, But some way dies on some day, ere we

Chastelard. You made a song once of old flowers and loves,

Will you not sing that rather? 'tis long gone

Since you sang last.

Queen. I had rather sigh than sing, And sleep than sigh; tis long since verily,

But I will once more sing; ay, thus it was. [Sings.

I.

J'ai vu faner bien des choses, Mainte feuille aller au vent. En songeant aux vieilles roses, J'ai pleuré souvent.

2.

Vois-tu dans les roses mortes Amour qui sourit caché? O mon amant, à nos portes L'as-tu vu couché? 3.

As-tu vu jamais au monde Vénus chasser et courir Fille de l'onde, avec l'onde Doit-elle mourir?

4.

Aux jours de neige et de givre L'amour s'effeuille et s'endort; Avec mai doit-il revivre, Ou bien est-il mort?

5

Qui sait où s'en vont les roses? Qui sait où s'en va le vent? En songeant à telle choses, F'ai pleuré souvent.

I never heard yet but love made good knights,

But for pure faith, by Mary's holiness, I think she lies about men's lips asleep, And if one kiss or pluck her by the hand

To wake her, why God help your woman's wit,

Faith is but dead; dig her grave deep at heart,

And hide her face with cerecloths; farewell faith.

Would I could tell why I talk idly.

Look,

Lore come my riddle readers. Welcome

Here come my riddle-readers. Welcome all!

Enter Murray, Darnley, Randolph, Lindsay, Morton, and other Lords. Sirs, be right welcome. Stand you by my side,

Fair cousin, I must lean on love or fall; You are a goodly staff, sir; tall enough, And fair enough to serve. My gentle lords,

I am full glad of God that in great grace He hath given me such a lordly stay as this;

There is no better friended queen alive. For the repealing of those banished

That stand in peril yet of last year's fault,

It is our will; you have our seal to that. Brother, we hear harsh bruits of bad

report

Blown up and down about our almoner; See you to this: let him be sought into: They say lewd folk make ballads of their spleen,

Strew miry ways of words with talk of

him;

If they have cause let him be spoken with.

Lindsay. Madam, they charge him with so rank a life

Were it not well this fellow were plucked out —

Seeing this is not an eye that doth offend,

But a blurred glass it were no harm to break;

Yea rather it were gracious to be done?

Queen. Let him be weighed, and use him as he is;

I am of my nature pitiful, ye know, And cannot turn my love unto a thorn In so brief space. Ye are all most

virtuous;

Yea, there is goodness grafted on this land;
But yet compassion is some part of

God.
There is much heavier business held on

hand
Than one man's goodness: yea, as

things fare here,
A matter worth more weighing. All
you wot

I am to choose a help to my weak feet, A lamp before my face, a lord and friend

To walk with me in weary ways, high up

Between the wind and rain and the hot sun.

Now I have chosen a helper to myself,

wot the best a woman ever won;

man that loves me and a revel man

A man that loves me, and a royal man, A goodly love and lord for any queen. But for the peril and despite of men

I have some time tarried and withheld myself,

Not fearful of his worthiness nor you, But with some lady's loathing to let My whole heart's love; for truly this is hard,

Not like a woman's fashion, shamefacedness

And noble grave reluctance of herself
To be the tongue and cry of her own

heart. Nathless plain speech is better than

much wit,
So ye shall bear with me; albeit I think
Ye have caught the mark whereat my
heart is bent.

I have kept close counsel and shut up men's lips,

But lightly shall a woman's will slip out, The foolish little wingèd will of her,

Through cheek or eye when tongue is charmed asleep.

For that good lord I have good will to wed,

I wot he knew long since which way it flew,

Even till it lit on his right wrist and sang.

Lo, here I take him by the hand: fair lords,

This is my kinsman, made of mine own blood,

I take to halve the state and services
That bow down to me, and to be my
head,

My chief, my master, my sweet lord and king.

Now shall I never say "sweet cousin" more

To my dear head and husband; here, fair sir,

I give you all the heart of love in me To gather off my lips. Did it like you,

The taste of it? sir, it was whole and true.

God save our king!

Darnley. Nay, nay, sweet love, no lord;

No king of yours though I were lord of these.

Queen. Let word be sent to all good friends of ours

To help us to be glad; England and France

Shall bear great part of our rejoicings up.

Give me your hand, dear lord; for from this time

t must not walk alone. Lords, have good cheer:

For you shall have a better face than

To set upon your kingly gold and show For Scotland's forehead in the van of things.

Go with us now, and see this news set out.

[Exeunt Queen, Darnley, and Lords.

As Chastelard is going out, enter

Mary Beaton.

Mary Beaton. Have you yet heard? You knew of this?

Chastelard. I know.

I was just thinking how such things were made

And were so fair as this is. Do you know

She held me here and talked, — the most sweet talk

Men ever heard of?

Mary Beaton. You hate me to the heart.

What will you do?

hearsed.

Chastelard. I know not: die some day,

But live as long and lightly as I can.

Will you now love me? faith, but if you do,

It were much better you were dead and

Will you do one thing for me?

Mary Beaton. Yea, all things.

Chastelard. Speak truth a little, for God's sake: indeed

It were no harm to do. Come, will you, sweet?

Though it be but to please God.

Mary Beaton. What will you do? Chastelard. Ay, true, I must do somewhat. Let me see:

To get between and tread upon his face —

Catch both her hands and bid men look at them.

How pure they were — I would do none of these,

Though they got wedded all the days in the year.

We may do well yet when all's come and gone.

I pray you on this wedding night of

Do but one thing that I shall ask of you, And Darnley will not hunger as I shall For that good time. Sweet, will you swear me this?

Mary Beaton. Yea; though to do it

were mortal to my soul As the chief sin.

Chastelard. I thank you: let us go.

## ACT III. - THE QUEEN.

Scene I. — The Queen's Chamber. Night. Lights burning in front of the bed.

Enter CHASTELARD and MARY BEATON.
Mary Beaton. Be tender of your feet
Chastelard. I shall not fail:
These ways have light enough to help

a man

That walks with such stirred blood in him as mine.

Mary Beaton. I would yet plead with you to save your head:

Nay, let this be then: sir, I chide you not.

Nay, let all come. Do not abide he yet.

Chastelard. Have you read never in French books the song

Called the Duke's Song, some boy made ages back,

A song of drag-nets hauled across
thwart seas

And plucked up with rent sides, and caught therein

A strange-haired woman with sad singing lips,

Cold in the cheek like any stray of sea, And sweet to touch? so that men swing her face,

And how she sighed out little Ahs of pain

And soft cries sobbing sideways from her mouth,

Fell in hot love, and having lain with

Died soon? One time I could have told it through:

Now I have kissed the sea-witch on her eyes,

And my lips ache with it: but I shall sleep

Full soon, and a good space of sleep.

Mary Beaton. Alas!

Chastelard. What makes you sigh though I be found a fool?

You have no blame: and for my death, sweet friend,

I never could have lived long either way. Why, as I live, the joy I have of this

Why, as I live, the joy I have of this Would make men mad that were not

mad with love;

I hear my blood sing, and my lifted heart Is like a springing water blown of wind For pleasure of this deed. Now, in God's name,

I swear if there be danger in delight
I must die now: if joys have deadly

teeth.

I'll have them bite my soul to death, and end

In the old asp's way, Egyptian-wise; be

In a royal purple fr.shion. Look, my love

Would kill me if my body were past

Of any man's hand; and to die thereof, I say, is sweeter than all sorts of life. I would not have her love me now, for

then
I should die meanlier some time. I am

safe, Sure of her sace, my life's end in her

sight, My blood shed out about her feet — by

God, My heart feels drunken when I think

or n.

See you, she will not rid herself of me,
Not though she slay me: her sweet lips
and life

Will smell of my spilt blood.

Mary Beaton. Give me good night. Chastelard, Yea, and good thanks.

[Exit MARY BEATON.]

Here is the very place:

Here has her body bowed the pillows in,

And here her head thrust under made the sheet

Smell soft of her mixed hair and spice: even here

Her aims pushed back the coverlet, pulled here

The golden silken curtain halfway in,

It may be, and made room to lean out loose,

Fair tender fallen arms. Now, if God would,

Doubtless he might take pity on my soul

To give me three clear hours, and then red hell

Snare me forever: this were merciful:

If I were God now, I should do thus much.

I must die next, and this were not so hard

For him to let me eat sweet fruit, and die

With my lips sweet from it. For one shall have

This fare for common days'-bread, which to me

Should be a touch kept always on my sense

To make hell soft, yea, the keen pain of hell

Soft as the loosening of wound arms in sleep.

Ah, love is good, and the worst part of it More than all things but death. She will be here

In some small while, and see me face to face

That am to give up life for her, and go Where a man lies with all his loves put out

And his lips full of earth. I think on her,

And the old pleasure stings and makes half-tears

Under mine eyelids. Prithee, love, come fast,

That I may die soon; yea, some kisses through,

I shall die joyfully enough, so God

Keep me alive till then. I feel her feet

Coming far off; now must I hold my heart,

Steadying my blood to see her patiently [Hides himself by the bed

Enter the QUEEN and DARNLEY. Queen. Nay, now go back: I have sent off my folk,

Maries and all. Pray you, let be my

hair;

I cannot twist the gold thread out of it That you wound in so close. Look, here it clings:

Ah! now you mar my hair unwinding it.

Do me no hurt, sir.

Darnley. I would do you ease;

Let me stay here.

Queen. Nay, will you go, my lord? Darnley. Eh? would you use me as a girl does fruit,

Touched with her mouth and pulled

away for game
To look thereon ere her lips feed? but

By God, I fare the worse for you.

Queen. Fair sir,

Give me this hour to watch with and say prayers:

You have not faith—it needs me to say prayers,

That with commending of this deed to

I may get grace for it.

Darnley. Why, lacks it grace? Is not all wedlock gracious of itself?

Queen. Nay, that I know not of.

Come, sweet, be hence.

Darnley. You have a sort of jewel

in your neck

That's like mine here.

Queen. Keep off your hands and go: You have no courtesy to be a king.

Darnley. Well, I will go: nay, but I thwart you not.

as you will and

Do as you will, and get you grace; farewell,

And for my part, grace keep this watch with me!

For I need grace to bear with you so

much. [Exit. Queen. So, he is forth. Let me be-

hold myself;
I am too pale to be so hot; I marvel
So little color should be bold in the

face
When the blood is not quieted. I have
But a brief space to cool my thoughts
upon.

If one should wear the hair thus heaped and curled

Would it look best? or this way in the neck?

Could one ungirdle in such wise one's

heart,

[ Taking off her girdle.

And ease it inwards as the waist is eased

By slackening of the slid clasp on it! How soft the silk is—gracious color

Violet shadows like new veins thrown

Each arm, and gold to fleck the faint sweet green

Where the wrist lies thus eased. I am right glad

I have no maids about to hasten me: So I will rest, and see my hair shed

So I will rest, and see my hair shed down
On either silk side of my woven sleeves

On either silk side of my woven sleeves, Get some new way to bind it back with — yea,

Fair mirror-glass, I am well ware of you,

Yea, I know that, I am quite beautiful. How my hair shines!—Fair face, be friends with me,

And I will sing to you: look in my face Now, and your mouth must help the song in mine.

> Alys la châtelaine Voit venir de par Seine Thiébault le capitaine Qui parle ainsi:

Was that the wind in the casement?

But the comb drawn through half my hissing hair

Laid on my arms — yet my flesh moved at it.

Dans ma camaille Plus de clou qui vaille, Dans ma cotte-maille Plus de fer aussi.

Ah, but I wrong the ballad-verse: what's good

In such frayed fringes of old rhymes, to make Their broken burden lag with us? me-

I could be sad now if I fell to think The least sad thing; ay, that sweet

lady's fool, Fool sorrow, would make merry with

mine eyes For a small thing. Nay, but I will

keep glad. Nor shall old sorrow be false friends

with me.

But my first wedding was not like to this -Fair faces then and laughter and sweet

And a pale little mouth that clung on

mine When I had kissed him by the faded

And either thin cheek beating with faint blood.

Well, he was sure to die soon; I do

He would have given his body to be slain.

Having embraced my body. Now, God knows.

I have no man to do as much for me As give me but a little of his blood To fill my beauty from, though I go

down Pale to my grave for want - I think

not. Pale -I am too pale surely - Ah!

Sees him in the glass, coming forward.

Chastelard. Be not afraid.

Queen. Saint Mary! what a shaken wit have I!

Nay, is it you? who let you through the doors?

Where be my maidens? which way got you in?

Nay, but stand up, kiss not my hands so hard;

By God's fair body, if you but breathe on them

You are just dead and slain at once. What adder

Has bit you mirthful mad? for by this

A man to have his head laughed off for mirth

Is no great jest. Lay not your eyes on me:

What! would you not be slain?

Chastelard. I pray you, madam, Bear with me a brief space, and let me speak.

I will not touch your garments even, nor speak

But in soft wise, and look some other

If that it like you; for I came not here For pleasure of the eyes; yet, if you will,

Let me look on you.

Queen. As you will, fair sir.

Give me that coif to gather in my hair —

I thank you - and my girdle - nay, that side.

Speak, if you will: yet if you will be gone,

Why, you shall go, because I hate you

You know that I might slay you with my lips,

With calling out? but I will hold my peace.

Chastelard. Yea, do some while. I had a thing to say;

I know not wholly what thing. O my sweet.

I am come here to take farewell of love That I have served, and life that I have lived

Made up of love, here in the sight of you

That all my life's time I loved more than God,

Who quits me thus with bitter death for it.

For you well know that I must shortly die,

My life being wound about you as it is, Who love me not; yet do not hate me, sweet.

But tell me wherein I came short of love:

For doubtless I came short of a just love,

And fell in some fool's fault that angered you.

Now that I talk men dig my grave for me

Out in the rain, and in a little while I shall be thrust in some sad space of earth

Out of your eyes; and you, O you my

love,

A newly wedded lady full of mirth And a queen girt with all good people's love,

You shall be fair and merry in all your

days.

Is this so much for me to have of you? Do but speak, sweet: I know these are no words

A man should say though he were now

But I am as a child for love, and have No strength at heart; yea, I am afraid to die,

For the harsh dust will lie upon my

Too thick to see you pass. Look how

I love you; did so love you always, that your

face Seen through my sleep has wrung mine eyes to tears

For pure delight in you. Why do you

You answer not, but your lips curl in twain

And your face moves; there, I shall make you weep,

And be a coward too; it were much best

I should be slain.

Queen. Yea, best such folk were slain; Why should they live to cozen fools with lies?

You would swear now you have used me faithfully;

Shall I not make you swear? I am ware of you:

You will not do it, nay, for the fear of God

You will not swear. Come, I am mer-

God made a foolish woman, making me. And I have loved your mistress with whole heart:

Say you do love her, you shall marry

And she give thanks: yet I could wish your love

Had not so lightly chosen forth a face: For your fair sake, because I hate you

Chastelard. What is to say? why, you do surely know

That since my days were counted for a man's

I have loved you; yea, how past help and sense.

Whatever thing was bitter to my love, I have loved you; how when I rode in

Your face went floated in among men's helms.

Your voice went through the shriek of slipping swords;

Yea, and I never have loved women well.

Seeing always in my sight I had your

Curled over, red and sweet; and the soft space

Of carven brows, and splendor of great throat

Swayed lily-wise: what pleasure should one have

To wind his arms about a lesser love? I have seen you; why, this were joy enough

For God's eyes up in heaven, only to see And to come never nearer than I am. Why, it was in my flesh, my bone and

blood. Bound in my brain, to love you; yea, and writ

All my heart over: if I would lie to you, I doubt I could not lie. Ah, you see

You know now well enough; yea, there, sweet love,

Let me kiss there.

Queen. I love you best of them.

Clasp me quite round till your lips cleave on mine, -

False mine, that did you wrong. give them dearly,

As you are sweet to them; for by love's love

I am not that evil woman in my heart

That laughs at a rent faith. O Chastelard,

Since this was broken to me of your new love

Nay, if there be no pardon in a man, What shall a woman have for loving

him?

Pardon me, sweet.

Chastelard. Yea, so I pardon you,

And this side now; the first way. Would God please

To slay me so! who knows how he

might please? Now I am thinking, if you know it not, How I might kill you, kiss your breath

clean out, And take your soul to bring mine

through to God That our two souls might close and be

one twain

Or a twain one, and God himself want

To set us either severally apart.

Oh, you must overlive me many years, And many years my soul be in waste hell:

But when some time God can no more refrain

To lay death like a kiss across your lips,

And great lords bear you clothed with funeral things,

And your crown girded over deadly

Then after all your happy reach of life For pity you shall touch me with your

Remembering love was fellow with my

Here in sweet earth, and make me well

of love. And heal my many years with piteous-

Queen. You talk too sadly and too

feignedly. Chastelard. Too sad, but not too

feigned: I am sad That I shall die here without feigning thus;

And without feigning I were fain to live. Queen. Alas, you will be taken presently,

And then you are but dead. Pray you, get hence.

Chastelard. I will not.

Queen. Nay, for God's love be away;

I have not seen the face of a sweet hour. Vou will be slain, and I get shame. God's mercy!

You were stark mad to come here; kiss me, sweet.

Oh, I do love you more than all men! yea,

Take my lips to you, close mine eyes up fast,

So you leave hold a little: there, for

Abide now, and to-morrow come to

Nay, lest one see red kisses in my throat -

Dear God! what shall I give you to be gone?

Chastelard. I will not go. Look, here's full night grown up;

Why should I seek to sleep away from here?

The place is soft, and the lights burn for sleep;

Be not you moved; I shall lie well enough.

Queen. You are utterly undone. Sweet, by my life, You shall be saved with taking ship at

For if you stay this foolish love's hour

out There is not ten days' likely life in you.

This is no choice. Chastelard. Nay, for I will not go. Queen. Oh, me! this is that Bayard's

blood of yours That makes you mad; yea, and you shall not stay.

I do not understand. Mind, you must

Alas, poor lord, you have no sense of me;

I shall be deadly to you.

Chastelard. Yea, I saw that;

But I saw not that when my death's day came

You could be quite so sweet to me.

Queen. My love!

If I could kiss my heart's root out on

You would taste love hid at the core of

Chastelard. Kiss me twice more This beautiful bowed head

That has such hair with kissing ripples

And shivering soft eyelashes and brows With fluttered blood; but laugh a little, sweetly,

That I may see your sad mouth's laugh-

ing look I have used sweet hours in seeing. Oh, will you weep?

I pray you, do not weep.

Queen. Nay, dear, I have

No tears in me; I never shall weep much,

I think, in all my life: I have wept for wrath

Sometimes, and for mere pain, but for

love's pity

I cannot weep at all. I would to God You loved me less; I give you all I can For all this love of yours, and yet I am

I shall live out the sorrow of your death And be glad afterwards. You know I

am sorry.

I should weep now; forgive me for your part.

God made me hard, I think. Alas! vou see

I had fain been other than I am.

Chastelard. Yea, love.

Comfort your heart. What way am I to die?

Queen. Ah! will you go yet, sweet? Chastelard. No, by God's body. You will not see? how shall I make

Look, it may be love was a sort of curse Made for my plague, and mixed up with my days

Somewise in their beginning; or indeed A bitter birth begotten of sad stars

At mine own body's birth, that heaven might make

My life taste sharp where other men drank sweet;

But whether in heavy body or broken

I know it must go on to be my death. There was the matter of my fate in me When I was fashioned first, and given

such life

As goes with a sad end; no fault but God's.

Yea, and for all this I am not penitent, You see I am perfect in these sins of mine.

I have my sins writ in a book to read: Now I shall die, and be well done with this.

But I am sure you cannot see such things,

God knows I blame you not. Queen. What shall be said?

You know most well that I am sorrow-

But you should chide me. Sweet, you have seen fair wars,

Have seen men slain and ridden red in them:

Why will you die a chamberer's death like this?

What! shall no praise be written of my knight,

For my fame's sake?

Chastelard. Nay, no great praise, i think;

I will no more; what should I do with death,

Though I died goodly out of sight of you?

I have gone once: here am I set now, sweet.

Till the end come. That is your husband, hark!

He knocks at the outer door. Kiss me just once.

You know now all you have to say. Nay, love,

Let him come quickly.

Enter DARNLEY, and afterwards the MARIES.

Darnley. Yea, what thing is here? Av, this was what the doors shut fast upon -

Ay, trust you to be fast at prayer, my sweet?

By God, I have a mind —

Chastelard. What mind then, sir?

A liar's lewd mind, to coin sins for jest Because you take me in such wise as this?

Look you, I have to die soon, and I swear,

That am no liar, but a free knight and lord.

I shall die clear of any sin to you,

Save that I came for no good will of mine;

i am no carle, I play fair games with faith,

And by mine honor for my sake I swear

I say but truth; for no man's sake save mine,

Lest I die shamed. Madam, I pray you say

I am no liar; you know me what I am, A sinful man and shortly to be slain,

That in a simple insolence of love Have stained with a fool's eyes your holy hours

And with a fool's words put your pity out;

Nathless you know if I be liar or no, Wherefore for God's sake give me grace to swear

(Yea, for mine too) how past all praise you are,

And stainless of all shame; and how all men

Lie, saying you are not most good and innocent,

Yea, the one thing good as God. Darnley. O sir, we know

You can swear well, being taken; you fair French

Dare swallow God's name for a lewd love-sake

As it were water. Nay, we know, we know;
Save your sweet breath now, lest you

lack it soon;
We are simple, we; we have not heard

of you.

Madam, by God you are well shamed
in him:

Ay, trust you to be fingering in one's face,

Play with one's neck-chain? ah, your I is maiden's man,

A relic of your people's?

Chastelard. Hold your peace, Or I will set an edge on your own lie

Shall scar yourself. Madam, have out your guard:

'Tis time I were got hence. Queen. Sweet Hamilton,

Hold you my hand, and help me to sit down.

O Henry, I am beaten from my wits! Let me have time, and live; call out my people —

Bring forth some armed guard to lay hold on him;

But see no man be slain. Sirs, hide your swords;

I will not have men slain.

Darnley. What! is this true?

Call the queen's people — help the queen there, you —

Ho, sirs! come in.

Enter some with the Guard. Queen. Lay hold upon that man;

Bear him away, but see he have no hurt.

Chastelard. Into your hands I render up myself

With a free heart; deal with me how you list,

But courteously, I pray you. Take my sword.

Farewell, great queen; the sweetness in your look

Makes life look bitter on me. Farewell, sirs. [He is taken out. Darnley. Yea, pluck him forth, and

have him hanged by dawn; He shall find bed enow to sleep. God's

love!
That such a knave should be a knight

like this!

Queen. Sir, peace awhile; this shall be as I please;

Take patience to you. Lords, I pray you see

All be done goodly; look they wrong him not.

Carmichael, you shall sleep with me to-night;

I am sorely shaken, even to the heart.
Fair lords,

I thank you for your care. Sweet, stay by me.

## ACT IV. - MURRAY.

Scene I. — The Queen's Lodging at St.

Andrew's.

The QUEEN and the four MARIES. Queen. Why will you break my heart with praying to me?

You Seyton, you Carmichael, you have wits.

You are not all run to tears; you do not think

It is my wrath or will that whets this axe

Against his neck?

Mary Scyton. Nay, these three weeks agone

I said the queen's wrath was not sharp enough

To shear a neck.

Queen. Sweet, and you did me right, And look you, what my mercy bears to fruit,

Danger and deadly speech and a fresh fault

Before the first was cool in people's lips;

A goodly mercy: and I wash hands of it. —

Speak you, there; have you ever found

me sharp? You weep and whisper with sloped necks and heads

Like two sick birds; do you think shame of me?

Nay, I thank God none can think shame of me:

of me; But am I bitter, think you, to men's

faults?
I think I am too merciful, too meek:
Why, if I could I would yet save this

man;
'Tis just boy's madness; a soft stripe

Would do to scourge the fault in his

French blood.

I would fain let him go. You, Hamil-

ton, You have a heart thewed harder than

my heart; When mine would threat it sighs, and wrath in it

Has a bird's flight and station, starves before

It can well feed or fly: my pulse of wrath

Sounds the running down of

You are the hardest woman I have known,

Your blood has frost and cruel gall in it,

You hold men off with bitter lips and eyes —

Such maidens should serve England; now, perfay,

I doubt you would have got him slain at once.

Come, would you not? come, would you let him live?

Mary Hamilton. Yes — I think yes; I cannot tell; maybe

I would have seen him punished.

Queen. Look you now,

There's maiden mercy; I would have him live—

For all my wifehood, maybe I weep too:

Here's a mere maiden falls to slaying at once,

Small shrift for her; God keep us from such hearts!

I am a queen too that would have him live,

But one that has no wrong and is no queen,

She would — What are you saying there, you twain?

Mary Carmichael. I said a queen's face

and so fair an one's

Would lose no grace for giving grace away;

That gift comes back upon the mouth it left,

And makes it sweeter, and sets fresh red on it.

Oueen. This comes of sonnets when

the dance draws breath;
These talking times will make a dearth

of grace.

But you — what ails you that your lips

are shut?
Weep, if you will; here are four friends

of yours

To weep as fast for pity of your tears. Do you desire him dead? nay, but men say

He was your friend, he fought them on your side,

He made you songs — God knows what songs he made!

Speak you for him a little: will you not?

Mary Beaton. Madam, I have no words.

Queen. No words? no pity — Have you no mercies for such men?

God help!

It seems I am the meekest heart on earth—

Yea, the one tender woman left alive, And knew it not. I will not let him

live,

For all my pity of him.

Mary Beaton. Nay, but, madam,

For God's love look a little to this thing.

If you do slay him you are but shamed to death;

All men will cry upon you, women weep,

Turning your sweet name bitter with

their tears; Red shame grow up out of your mem-

ory

And burn his face that would speak well of you;

You shall have no good word nor pity, none,

Till some such end be fallen upon you:

I am but cold, I knew I had no words. I will keep silence.

Queen. Yea, now, as I live,

I wist not of it: troth, he shall not die.

See you, I am pitiful, compassionate, I would not have men slain for my

love's sake,
But if he live to do me three times
wrong,

Why then my shame would grow up green and red

Like any flower. I am not whole at heart;

In faith, I wot not what such things should be.

I doubt it is but dangerous; he must die.

Mary Beaton. Yea, but you will not slay him.

Queen. Swear me that,

I'll say he shall not die for your oath's sake.

What will you do for grief when he is dead?

Mary Beaton. Nothing for grief, but hold my peace and die.

Queen. Why, for your sweet sake one might let him live;

But the first fault was a green seed of shame,

And now the flower, and deadly fruit will come

With apple-time in autumn. By my life,

I would they had slain him there in Edinburgh;

But I reprieve him; lo the thank I get,
To set the base folk muttering like
smoked bees

Of shame and love, and how love comes of shame,

And how the queen loves shame that comes of love;

Yet I say naught and go about my ways,

And this mad fellow that I respited

Being forth and free, lo now the second time

Ye take him by my bed in wait. Now see

If I can get goodwill to pardon him; With what a face may I crave leave of

To respite him, being young and a good knight

And mad for perfect love? shall I go say,—

Dear lords, because ye took him shamefully,

Let him not die; because his fault is foul,

Let him not die; because if he do live I shall be held a harlot of all men,

I pray you, sweet sirs, that he may not die?

Mary Beaton. Madam, for me I would not have him live;

Mine own heart's life was ended with my fame,

And my life's breath will shortly follow them;

So that I care not much; for you wot well

I have lost love and shame and fame, and all

To no good end; nor while he had his life

Have I got good of him that was my love.

Save that for courtesy (which may God

He kissed me once as one might kiss

for love

Out of great pity for me; saving this, He never did me grace in all his life. And when you have slain him, madam, it may be

I shall get grace of him in some new

In a new place, if God have care of us. Queen. Bid you my brother to me presently. [Exeunt Maries.

And yet the thing is pitiful; I would There were some way. To send him overseas,

Out past the long firths to the cold keen

Where the sharp sound is that one

hears up here — Or hold him in strong prison till he died -

He would die shortly - or to set him

And use him softly till his brains were healed -

There is no way. Now never while I

Shall we twain love together any more, Nor sit at rhyme as we were used to do, Nor each kiss other only with the eyes A great way off ere hand or lip could reach;

There is no way.

Enter Murray. O, you are welcome,

You know what need I have; but I praise heaven,

Having such need, I have such help of you.

I do believe no queen God ever made Was better holpen than I look to be. What! if two brethren love not heartily, Who shall be good to either one of them?

Murray. Madam, I have great joy of your good will.

Queen. I pray you, brother, use no courtesies:

I have some fear you will not suffer me When I shall speak. Fear is a fool, I think,

Yet hath he wit enow to fool my wits,

Being but a woman's. Do not answer

Till you shall know; yet if you have a

I shall be fain to hear it; but I think There is no word to help me; no man's

There be two things yet that should do me good, -

A speeding arm and a great heart. My lord.

I am soft-spirited as women are,

And ye wot well I have no harder heart: Yea, with my will I would not slay a thing,

But all should live right sweetly if I might;

So that man's blood-spilling lies hard on me.

I have a work yet for mine honor's

A thing to do, God wot I know not how.

Nor how to crave it of you: nay, by heaven,

I will not shame myself to show it you: I have not heart.

Murray. Why, if it may be done With any honor, or with good men's

excuse, I shall well do it.

Queen. I would I wist that well.

Sir, do you love me?

Murray. Yea, you know I do. Queen. In faith, you should well love

me, for I love The least man in your following for your sake

With a whole sister's heart.

Murray. Speak simply, madam;

I must obey you, being your bounden

Queen. Sir, so it is you know what things have been,

Even to the endangering of mine innocent name,

And by no fault, but by men's evil will.

If Chastelard have trial openly,

I am but shamed.

Murray. This were a wound indeed, If your good name should lie upon his lip.

Queen. I will the judges put him not to plead,

For my fame's sake; he shall not answer them.

Murray. What! think you he will speak against your fame?

Queen. I know not; men might feign belief of him

For hate of me; it may be he will speak;

In brief, I will not have him held to proof.

Murray. Well, if this be, what good is to be done?

Queen. Is there no way but he must speak to them,

Being had to trial plainly?

Murray. I think, none.

Queen. Now mark, my lord; I swear he will not speak.

Murray. It were the best if you could make that sure.

Queen. There is one way. Look, sir, he shall not do it:

Shall not, or will not, either is one

I speak as I would have you understand.

Murray. Let me not guess at you; speak certainly.

Queen. You will not mind me: let him be removed;

Take means to get me surety: there be means.

Murray. So, in your mind, I have

to slay the man?
Queen. Is there a mean for me to

save the man?

Murray. Truly I see no mean except

Murray. Truly I see no mean except your love.

Queen. What love is that, my lord?

what think you of,
Talking of love and of love's mean in

me And of your guesses and of slaying

him?
Why, I say naught, have naught to say:

God help me!
I bid you but take surety of the man,

Get him removed.

Murray. Come, come, be clear with

You bid me to despatch him privily.

Queen. God send me sufferance! I bid you, sir?

Nay, do not go: what matter if I did? Nathless I never bade you; no, by God.

Be not so wroth; you are my brother born;

Why do you dwell upon me with such eyes?

For love of God you should not bear me hard.

Murray. What! are you made of flesh?

Queen. Oh, now I see.

You had rather lose your wits to do me harm

Than keep sound wits to help me. *Murray*. It is right strange;

The worst man living hath some fear, some love,

Holds somewhat dear a little for life's sake,

Keeps fast to some compassion; you have none;

You know of nothing that remembrance knows

To make you tender. I must slay the man?

Nay, I will do it.

Queen. Do, if you be not mad.

I am sorry for him; and he must needs die.

I would I were assured you hate me

I have no heart to slay him by my will.

I pray you think not bitterly of me.

Murray. Is it your pleasure such a
thing were done?

Queen. Yea, by God's body is it, certainly.

Murray. Nay, for your love then, and for honor's sake,

This thing must be.

Queen. Yea, should I set you on? Even for my love then, I beseech you,

To seek him out, and lest he prate of

To put your knife into him ere he come forth:

Meseems this were not such wild work to do.

Murray. I'll have him in the prison taken off.

Queen. I am bounden to you, even for my name's sake,

When that is done.

Murray. I pray you fear me not Farewell. I would such things were not to do.

Or not for me; yea, not for any man.

Exit. Queen. Alas! what honor have I to give thanks?

I would he had denied me: I had held my peace

Thenceforth forever; but h wrung out

the word. Caught it before my lip was fain of

it -It was his fault to put it in my mind, Yea, and to feign a loathing of his fault.

Now is he about devising my love's

And nothing loath. Nay, since he must needs die.

Would he were dead and come alive

And I might keep him safe! He doth live now.

And I may do what love I will to him; But by to-morrow he will be stark dead, Stark slain and dead; and for no sort of love

Will he so much as kiss me half a kiss. Were this to do I would not do it again.

Re-enter MURRAY.

What! have you taken order? is it

It were impossible to do so soon.

Nay, answer me.

Murray. Madam, I will not do it. Queen, How did you say? I pray, sir, speak again:

I know not what you said. Murray. I say I will not;

I have thought thereof, and have made up my heart

To have no part in this: look you to it. Queen. O, for God's sake! you will not have me shamed?

your sin.

Queen. It were a good deed to deliver me.

I am but woman, of one blood with you. A feeble woman; put me not to shame; I pray you of your pity do me right.

Yea, and no fleck of blood shall cleave to you

For a just deed.

Murray. I know not: I will none. Queen. Oh, you will never let him speak to them

To put me in such shame? Why, I should die

Out of pure shame and mine own burning blood;

Yea, my face feels the shame lay hold on it.

I am half burnt already in my thought. Take pity of me. Think how shame slays a man;

How shall I live, then? would you have me dead?

I pray you for our dead dear father's sake.

Let not men mock at me. Nay, if he speak,

I shall be sung in mine own towns. Have pity.

What! will you let men stone me in the ways?

Murray. Madam, I shall take pains the best I may

To save your honor, and what thing lieth in me

That will I do; but no close manslay-

I will not have God's judgment gripe my throat

When I am dead, to hale me into For a man's sake slain on this wise.

Take heed.

[Exit. See you to that. Queen. One of you maidens there

Bid my lord hither. Now, by Mary's soul.

He shall not die and bring me into shame.

There's treason in you like a fever, hot, My holy-natured brother, cheek and

Murray. I will not dip my hand into You look red through with it; sick, honor-sick,

pecked with the blain of treason, leper-like, -

scrupulous fair traitor with clean

lips.

f one should sue to hell to do him good,

Ie were as brotherly holpen as I am. 'his man must live, and say no harm of me;

may reprieve and cast him forth; yea, so -

'his were the best; or if he die midway -

lea, any thing, so that he die not here. To the MARIES within. retch hither Darnley. Nay, ye gape

on me -What! doth he sleep, or feeds, or plays

at games?

Why, I would see him; I am weary for his sake;

Bid my lord in. - Nathless he will but chide;

Nay, fleer and laugh: what should one say to him?

There were some word if one could hit on it:

some way to close with him: I wot not. -Sir,

Enter DARNLEY.

Please it your love I have a suit to you. Darnley. What sort of suit? Queen. Nay, if you be not friends -

have no suit towards mine enemies. Darnley. Eh! do I look now like your enemy?

Queen. You have a way of peering under brow

I do not like. If you see any thing in me that irks you, I will painfully Labor to lose it: do but show me favor, And as I am your faithful humble wife This foolishness shall be removed

Darnley. Why do you laugh and mock me with stretched hands?

Faith, I see no such thing. Queen. That is well seen.

Come, I will take my heart between my

Use it not hardly. Sir, my suit begins; That you would please to make me that

I am.

(In sooth I think I am) mistress and queen

Of mine own people.

Darnley. Why, this is no suit:

This is a simple matter, and your own. Queen. It was, before God made you king of me.

Darnley. No king, by God's grace;

were I such a king,

I'd sell my kingdom for six roods of rye. Queen. You are too sharp upon my words; I would

Have leave of you to free a man condemned.

Darnley. What man is that, sweet? Queen. Such a mad poor man

As God desires us use not cruelly. Darnley. Is there no name a man may call him by?

Queen. Nay, my fair master, what fair game is this?

Why, you do know him: it is Chastelard.

Darnley. Ay, is it soothly? Queen. By my life, it is:

Sweet, as you tender me, so pardon him. Darnley. As he doth tender you, so pardon me;

For, if it were the mean to save my life, He should not live a day.

Queen. Nay, shall not he?

Darnley. Look what an evil wit old Fortune hath:

Why, I came here to get his time cut off.

This second fault is meat for lewd men's mouths:

You were best have him slain at once. 'tis hot.

Queen. Give me the warrant, and sit down, my lord.

Why, I will sign it; what, I understand How this must be. Should not my name stand here?

Darnley. Yea, there, and here the seal.

Queen. Ay, so you say.

Shall I say too what I am thinking of? Darnley. Do, if you will.

Queen. I do not like your suit.

Darnley. 'Tis of no Frenchman fash

Queen. No, God wot;

'Tis nowise great men's fashion in French land

To clap a headsman's tabard on their backs.

Darnley. No, madam?

Queen. No; I never wist of that.

Is it a month gone I did call you lord? I chose you by no straying stroke of sight,

But with my heart to love you heartily. Did I wrong then? did mine eye draw

my heart?

I know not; sir, it may be I did wrong: And yet to see you I should call it right Even yet to love you; and would choose again,

Again to choose you.

Darnley. There, I love you too,

Take that for sooth, and let me take this hence.

Queen. O, do you think I hold you off with words?

Why, take it then; there is my handwriting,

And here the hand that you shall slay him with.

'Tis a fair hand, a maiden-colored one: I doubt yet it has never slain a man.

You never fought yet save for game. I

You never fought yet save for game, I wis.

Nay, thank me not, but have it from my sight;

Go and make haste for fear he be got forth:

It may be such a man is dangerous; Who knows what friends he hath? and

by my faith
I doubt he hath seen some fighting, I
do fear

He hath fought and shed men's blood; ye are wise men

That will not leave such dangerous things alive;

'Twere well he died the sooner for your sakes.

Pray you make haste; it is not fit he live.

Darnley. What! will you let him die so easily?

Queen. Why, God have mercy! what way should one take

To please such people? there's some cunning way,

Something I miss, out of my simple soul What! must one say "Beseech you do no harm,"

Or "for my love, sweet cousins, be not hard,"

Or "let him live but till the vane come round"—

Will such things please you? well then, have your way;

Sir, I desire you, kneeling down with tears,

With sighs and tears, fair sir, require of you,

Considering of my love I bear this man, Just for my love's sake let him not be hanged

Before the sundown; do thus much for me,

To have a queen's prayers follow after you.

Darnley, I know no need for you to

Darnley. I know no need for you to gibe at me.

Queen. Alack! what heart then shall I have to jest?

There is no woman jests in such a wise—
For the shame's sake I pray you hang

him not, Seeing how I love him, save indeed in

Sweet twisted silk of my sad handiwork. Nay, and you will not do so much for

me;
You vex your lip, biting the blood and all:

Were this so hard, and you compassionate?

I am in sore case then, and will weep indeed.

Darnley. What do you mean to cast such gibes at me?

Queen. Woe's me, and will you turn my tears to thorns?

Nay, set your eyes a little in my face: See, do I weep? what will you make of me?

Will you not swear I love this prisoner? Ye are wise, and ye will have it; yet for me

I wist not of it. We are but feeble fools,

And love may catch us when we lie asleep,

And yet God knows we know not this a whit.

Come, look on me, swear you believe it not:

It may be I will take your word for that. Darnley. Do you not love him? nay, but verily?

Queen. Now then, make answer to me verily,

Which of us twain is wiser? for my

I will not swear I love not, if you will; Ye be wise men and many men, my

lords, And ye will have me love him, ye will

swear

That I do love him; who shall say ye

Look on your paper; maybe I have

wept: Doubtless I love your hanged man in

my heart. What! is the writing smutched or gone

awry? Or blurred — ay, surely so much — with

one tear, One little sharp tear strayed on it by

chance? Come, come, the man is deadly dangerous:

Let him die presently.

Darnley. You do not love him;

Well, yet he need not die; it were right hard

To hang the fool because you love him

Queen. You have keen wits and thereto courtesy

To catch me with. No, let this man not die;

It were no such perpetual praise to you To be his doomsman, and in doglike wise

Bite his brief life in twain.

Darnley. Truly it were not.

Queen. Then for your honor and my love of you

(Oh, I do love you! but you know not, sweet,

You shall see how much), think you for their sake

He may go free?

Darnley. How, freely forth of us?

But yet he loves you, and being mad with love

Makes matter for base mouths to chew upon:

'Twere best he live not yet.

Queen. Will you say that?

Darnley. Why should he live to breed you bad reports?

Let him die first.

Queen. Sweet, for your sake, not so. Darnley. Fret not yourself to pity; let him die.

Queen. Come, let him live a little; it shall be

A grace to us.

Darnley. By God, he dies at once. Queen. Now, by God's mother, if I respite him,

Though you were all the race of you in

And had more tongues than hairs to cry on me,

He should not lose a hair.

Darnley. This is mere mercy -

But you thank God you love him not a

Queen. It shall be what it please; and if I please

It shall be any thing. Give me the war-

Darnley. Nay, for your sake and love of you, not I,

To make it dangerous.

Queen. Oh, God's pity, sir!

You are tender of me; will you serve me so.

Against mine own will, shew me so much love,

Do me good service that I loath being done,

Out of pure pity?

Darnley. Nay, your word shall stand. Queen. What makes you gape so beastlike after blood?

Were you not bred up on some hangman's hire,

And dieted with fleshmeats at his hand, And fed into a fool? Give me that paper.

Darnley. Now for that word I will not. Queen. Nay, sweet love,

For your own sake be just a little wise: Come, I beseech you.

Darnley. Pluck not at my hands. Queen. No, that I will not: I am brain-broken, mad;

Pity my madness for sweet marriage-

And my great love's; I love you to say

this;
I would not have you cross me, out of

love.
But for true love should I not chafe

indeed?

And now I do not.

Darnley. Yea, and late you chid,

You chafed and jested and blew soft and hard—
No for that "fool" you shall not fool

No, for that "fool" you shall not fool me so.

Queen. You are no churl, sweet, will you see me weep?

Look, I weep now; be friends with my

Think each of them beseeches you of love,

And hath some tongue to cry on you for love,

And speak soft things; for that which loves not you

Is none of mine, not though they grow of grief

And grief of you; be not too hard with them.

You would not of your own heart slay a man;

Nay, if you will, in God's name make me weep,

I will not hate you; but at heart, sweet lord,

Be not at heart my sweet heart's enemy. If I had many mighty men to friend, I would not plead too lovingly with you To have your love.

Darnley. Why, yet you have my love. Queen. Alas! what shall mine ene-

mies do to me

If I be used so hardly of my friends? Come, sir, you hate me; yet for all your hate

You cannot have such heart.

Durnley. What sort of heart?

I have no heart to be used shamefully,

If you mean that.

Queen. Would God I loved you not! Vou are too hard to be used lovingly.

Darnley. You are moved too much for such a little love

As you bear me.

Queen. God knows you do me wrong; God knows the heart, sweet, that I love you with.

Hark you, fair sir, I'd have all well

with you;

Do you not fear at sick men's time of night

What end may come? are you so sure of heart?

Is not your spirit surprisable in sleep? Have you no evil dreams? Nay, look you, love,

I will not be flung off your heart and hand,

I am no snake: but tell me for your love, Have you no fancies how these things will end

In the pit's mouth? how all life-deeds will look

WIII IOOK

At the grave's edge that lets men into hell?

For my part, who am weak and woman-

eyed, It turns my soul to tears: I doubt this

blood
Fallen on our faces when we twain are

dead Will scar and burn them: yea, for

heaven is sweet,
And loves sweet deeds that smell not

of spilt blood. Let us not kill: God that made mercy

first Pities the pitiful for their deed's sake.

Darnley. Get you some painting; with a cheek like this

You'll find no faith in listeners.

Queen. How, fair lord?

Darnley. I say that looking with this face of yours

None shall believe you holy. What! you talk,

Take mercy in your mouth, eat holiness,

Put God under your tongue, and feed on heaven,

With fear and faith and — faith, I know not what —

And look as though you stood and saw men slain To make you game and laughter: nay,

your eyes
Threaten as unto blood. What will

you do

To make men take your sweet word?

You are pitiful as he that's hired for

death, And loves the slaying yet better than

the hire.

Queen. You are wise that live to

threat and tell me so: Do you love life too much?

Darnley. Oh, now you are sweet,

Right tender now: you love not blood nor death,

You are too tender.

Queen. Yea, too weak, too soft:

Sweet, do not mock me, for my love's sake; see

How soft a thing I am. Will you be hard?

The heart you have, has it no sort of fear?

Darnley. Take off your hand, and let me go my way,

And do my deed; and when the doing

is past
I will come home, and teach you tender
things

Out of my love till you forget my wrath.

I will be angry when I see good need, And will grow gentle after,—fear not that;

You shall get no wrong of my wrongdoing.

So I take leave.

Queen. Take what you will; take all. You have taken half my heart away with words:

Take all I have, and take no leave; I have

No leave to give: yea, shortly shall lack leave,

I think, to live; but I crave none of you;

I would have none: yet for the love I have,

If I get ever a mean to show it you,
I pray God put you some day in my
hand

That you may take that too.

Darnley. Well, as he please:

God keep you in such love; and so farewell. [Exit.

Queen. So fare I as your lover, but not well. —

Ah, sweet, if God be ever good to me

To put you in my hand! I am come to shame;

Let me think now, and let my wits not

God, for dear mercy, let me not forget
Why I should be so angry: the dull
blood

Beats at my face, and blinds me; I am

chafed to death, And I am shamed; I shall go mad and

die.
Truly I think I did kneel down, did

Yea, weep (who knows?) it may be—
all for that.

Yea, if I wept not, this was blood brake forth

And burnt mine eyelids; I will have blood back,

And wash them cool in the hottest of his heart,

Or I will slay myself: I cannot tell.

I have given gold for brass, and lo, the pay

Cleaves to my fingers; there's no way to mend, —

Not while life stays: would God that it were gone!

The fool will feed upon my fame, and laugh;

Till one seal up his tongue and lips with blood,

He carries half my honor and good name

Between his teeth. Lord God, mine head will fail!

When have I done thus since I was alive?

And these ill times will deal but ill with me —

My old love slain, and never a new to help,

And my wits gone, and my blithe use of life,

And all the grace was with me. Love

— perchance

If I save love I shall well save myself

I could find heart to bid him take such fellows,

And kill them to my hand. I was the fool

To sue to these, and shame myself: God knows

I was a queen born, I will hold their heads

Here in my hands for this. Which of you waits?

Enter MARY BEATON and MARY CARMICHAEL.

No maiden of them? — what, no more than this?

Mary Carmichael. Madam, the lady Seyton is gone forth;

She is ill at heart with watching.

Queen. Ay, at heart -

All girls must have such tender sides to the heart

They break for one night's watching, ache to death

For an hour's pity, for a half-hour's love —

Wear out before the watches, die by dawn,

And ride at noon to burial. God's my pity!

Where's Hamilton? doth she ail too? at heart,

I warrant her at heart.

Mary Beaton. I know not, madam.

Queen. What! sick or dead? I am well holpen of you:

Come hither to me. What pale blood you have!

Is it for fear you turn such cheeks to me?

Why, if I were so loving, by my hand, I would have set my head upon the chance,

And loosed him though I died. What will you do?

Have you no way?

Mary Beaton. None but your mercy. Queen. Ay?

Why, then the thing is piteous. Think, for God's sake—

Is there no loving way to fetch him forth?

Nay, what a white thin-blooded thing is love,

To help no more than this doth! Were I in love,

I would unbar the ways to-night, and then

Laugh death to death to-morrow, mock him dead;

I think you love well with one half your heart,

And let fear keep the other. Hark you now: You said there was some friend durst

break my bars —
Some Scotch name — faith, as if I wist

of it!

Ye have such heavy wits to help one

with —

Some man that had some mean to

Some man that had some mean to save him by—

Tush, I must be at pains for you!

Mary Beaton. Nay, madam,

It were no boot; he will not be let forth.

Queen. I say, the name. Oh, Robert Erskine — yea,

A fellow of some heart: what saith he?

Mary Beaton. Madam,
The thing was sound all through, yea,

all went well, But for all prayers that we could make

to him

He would not fly: we cannot get him

forth.

Oueen. Great God! that men should

have such wits as this!

I have a mind to let him die for that;

And yet I wot not. Said he, he loathed his life?

Mary Beaton. He says your grace given would scathe yourself,

And little grace for such a grace as that

Be with the little of the life he kept To cast off some time more unworthily.

Queen. God help me! what should wise folk do with him?

These men be weaker-witted than mere fools

When they fall mad once; yet by Mary's soul

I am sorrier for him than for men right wise.

God wot a fool that were more wise than he

Would love me something worse than Chastelard,

Ay, and his own soul better. Do you think

(There's no such other sort of fool alive)

That he may live?

Mary Beaton. Yea, by God's mercy, madam,

To your great praise and honor from all men

If you should keep him living.

Queen. By God's light,
I have good will to do it. A

I have good will to do it. Are you sure,

If I would pack him with a pardon hence,

He would speak well of me - not hint and halt,

Smile and look back, sigh and say love runs out,

But times have been — with some loose laugh cut short,

Bit off at lip — eh?

Mary Beaton. No, by heaven he would not!

Queen. You know how quickly one may be belied —
Faith, you should know it; I never

thought the worst;
One may touch love, and come with clean hands off—

But you should know it. What! he will not fly—

Not though I wink myself asleep, turn blind—

Which that I will I say not?

Mary Beaton. Nay, not he;

We had good hope to bring him well aboard,

Let him slip safe down by the firths to sea,

Out under Leith by night-setting, and thence
Take ship for France, and serve there

out of sight
In the new wars.

Queen. Ay, in the new French wars — You wist thereof too, madam, with good leave —

A goodly bait to catch mine honor with And let me wake up with my name bit through.

I had been much bounden to you twain, methinks,

But for my knight's sake and his love's a by God,

He shall not die in God's despite nor mine.

Call in our chief lords; bid one see to it, -

Ay, and make haste.

[Exeunt Mary Beaton and Mary Carmichael.

Now shall I try their teeth:
I have done with fear; now nothing
but pure love

And power and pity shall have part in me;

I will not throw them such a spirit in flesh

To make their prey on. Though he be mad indeed,

It is the goodliest madness ever smote

Upon man's heart. A kingly knight — in faith,

Meseems my face can yet make faith in men,

And break their brains with beauty:
for a word,
An eyelid's twitch, an eye's turn, tie

them fast And make their souls cleave to me.

God be thanked,
This air has not yet curdled all the

That went to make me fair. An hour agone,

I thought I had been forgotten of men's love

More than dead women's faces are forgot
Of after lovers. All men are not of

earth:

For all the frost of fools and this cold land,

There be some yet catch fever of my face

And burning for mine eyes' sake. 1 did think

My time was gone when men would dance to death

As to a music, and lie laughing down
In the grave and take their funerals for
their feasts,

To get one kiss of me. I have some strength yet,

Though I lack power on men that lack

men's blood.

Yea, and God wot I will be merciful; For all the foolish hardness round my heart

That tender women miss of to their praise,

They shall not say but I had grace to

Even for love's sake. Why, let them take their way:

What ails it them though I be soft or

Soft hearts would weep and weep, and

let men die For very mercy and sweet-heartedness; I that weep little for my pity's sake,

I have the grace to save men. Let fame go -

I care not much what shall become of fame.

So I save love, and do mine own soul right:

I'll have my mercy help me to revenge On all the crew of them. How will he look,

Having my pardon! I shall have sweet thanks

And love of good men for my mercy's love. -

Yea, and be quit of these I hate to death,

With one good deed.

Enter the MARIES.

Mary Beaton, Madam, the lords are here.

Queen. Stand you about me, I will speak to them.

I would the whole world stood up in my face,

And heard what I shall say. Bid them come in.

Enter MURRAY, RANDOLPH, MORTON, LINDSAY, and other Lords.

Hear you, fair lords, I have a word to There is one thing I would fain under-

stand, -

If I be queen, or no; for by my life Methinks I am growing unqueenly. No man speak?

Pray you take note, sweet lord ambassador.

I am no queen: I never was born queen Alack, that one should fool us in this wise !

Take up my crown, sir, I will none of it Till it hath bells on as a fool's cap hath. Nay, who will have it? no man take i

Was there none worthy to be shamee. but I?

Here are enow good faces, good to

Will you be king, fair brother? or you, my lord?

Give me a spinner's curch, a wisp of reed.

Any mean thing; but, God's love, no more gold,

And no more shame: let boys throw dice for it.

Or cast it to the grooms for tennis-play, For I will none.

Murray. What would your highness have?

Queen. Yea, yea, I said I was no majesty;

I shall be shortly fallen out of grace. What would I have? I would have leave to live:

Perchance I shall not shortly: nay, for

That have no leave to respite other lives To keep mine own life were small praise

Murray. Your majesty hath power to respite men,

As we well wot; no man saith otherwise.

Queen. What! is this true? 'tis a thing wonderful -

So great I cannot be well sure of it.

Strange that a queen should find such grace as this

At such lords' hands as ye be, - such great lords:

I pray you let me get assured again, Lest I take jest for truth, and shame

myself. And make you mirth: to make your

mirth of me, God wot it were small pains to you, my lords.

But much less honor. I may send reprieve -

With your sweet leaves I may? Murray. Assuredly.

Queen. Lo, now, what grace is this I have of you!

I had a will to respite Chastelard,

And would not do it for very fear of

Look you, I wist not ye were merciful. Morton. Madam -

Queen. My lord, you have a word to

Doth it displease you such a man should live

Morton. 'Twere a mad mercy in your majesty

To lay no hand upon his second fault And let him thrice offend you.

Queen. Ay, my lord?

Morton. It were well done to muffle lewd men's mouths

By casting of his head into their laps:

It were much best.

Queen. Yea, truly were it so? But if I will not, yet I will not, sir, For all the mouths in Scotland. Now, by heaven,

As I am pleased he shall not die, but

So shall ye be. There is no man shall

Except it please me; and no man shall say,

Except it please me, if I do ill or well. Which of you now will set his will to

Not you, nor you I think, nor none of you,

Nor no man living that loves living well. Let one stand forth and smite me with his hand,

Wring my crown off and cast it underfoot,

And he shall get my respite back of me, And no man else: he shall bid live or die.

And no man else; and he shall be my lord.

And no man else. What! will not one be king?

Will not one here lay hold upon my state?

I am queen of you for all things come and gone.

Nay, my chief lady, and no meaner

The chiefest of my maidens, shall bear

And give it to my prisoner for a grace. Who shall deny me? who shall do me wrong?

Bear greeting to the lord of Chastelard, And this withal for respite of his life,

For by my head he shall die no such way:

Nay, sweet, no words, but hence and back again.

[Exit MARY BEATON. Farewell, dear lords; ye have shown grace to me,

And some time I will thank you as I may;

Till when, think well of me and what is done.

## ACT V. - CHASTELARD.

Scene I. — Before Holyrood. A crowd of people; among them Soldiers, Burgesses, a Preacher, etc.

First Citizen. They are not out yet. Have you seen the man?

What manner of man?

Second Citizen. Shall he be hanged, or no?

There was a fellow hanged some three days gone,

Wept the whole way: think you this man shall die

In better sort, now?

First Citizen. Eh, these shawm-players That walk before strange women, and make songs!

How should they die well?

Third Citizen. Is it sooth men say

Our dame was wont to kiss him on the face

In lewd folk's sight?

First Citizen. Yea, saith one, all day

He used to sit and jangle words in

To suit with shakes of faint adulterous sound

Some French lust in men's ears; she made songs too,

Soft things to feed sin's amorous mouth upon,—
Delicate sounds for dancing at in hell

Delicate sounds for dancing at in hell. Fourth Citizen. Is it priest Black that he shall have by him

When they do come?

Third Citizen. Ah! by God's leave, not so;

If the knave show us his peeled onion's head
And that damned flagging jowl of his —

Second Citizen. Nay, sirs, Take heed of words; moreover, please

it you,

This man hath no pope's part in him. Third Citizen. I say

That if priest whore's friend with the lewd thief's cheek

Show his foul blinking face to shame all ours,

It goes back fouler; well, one day hell's fire

Will burn him black indeed.

A Woman. What kind of man? 'Tis yet great pity of him if he be Goodly enow for this queen's paramour.

A French lord overseas? what doth he here,

With Scotch folk here?

First Citizen. Fair mistress, I think well,

He doth so at some times that I were fain

To do as well.

The Woman. Nay, then he will not die.

First Citizen. Why, see you, if one eat a piece of bread

Baked as it were a certain prophet's way,

Not upon coals, now — you shall apprehend —

If defiled bread be given a man to eat, Being thrust into his mouth, why he shall eat,

And with good hap shall eat; but if now, say,

One steal this, bread and beastliness and all,

When scarcely for pure hunger flesh and bone

Cleave one to other — why, if he steal to eat,

Be it even the filthiest feeding — though the man

Be famine-flayed of flesh and skin, I say He shall be hanged.

Third Citizen. Nay, stolen said you, sir?

See, God bade eat abominable bread, And freely was it eaten — for a sign

This, for a sign—and doubtless as did God, So may the devil; bid one eat freely

and live,

Not for a sign.

Second Citizen. Will you think thus of her?

But wherefore should they get this fellow slain

If he be clear toward her?

Third Citizen. Sir, one must see

The day comes when a woman sheds her sin

As a bird moults; and she being shifted so,

The old mate of her old feather pecks at her

To get the right bird back; then she being stronger

Picks out his eyes — eh?

Second Citizen. Like enough to be;
But if it be — Is not one preaching
there

With certain folk about him?

First Citizen. Yea, the same

Who preached a month since from Eze-

Concerning these twain,—this our queen that is,

And her that was, and is not now so much

As queen over hell's worm.

Third Citizen. Ay, said he not,

This was Aholah, the first one of these, Called sisters only for a type — being twain,

Twain Maries, no whit Nazarene? the

Bred out of Egypt like the water-worm With sides in wet green places baked with slime

And festered flesh that steams against the sun:

A plague among all people, and a type Set as a flake upon a leper's fell.

First Citizen. Yea, said he, and unto her the men went in,

The men of Pharaoh's, beautiful with

And with red gold, fair foreign-footed men,

The bountiful fair men, the courteous men,

The delicate men with delicate feet, that went

Curling their small beards Agag-fashion, yea,

Pruning their mouths to nibble words behind

With pecking at God's skirts—small broken oaths

Fretted to shreds between most dainty lips,

And underbreath some praise of Ashtaroth

Sighed laughingly.

Second Citizen. Was he not under guard

For the good word?

First Citizen. Yea, but now forth again —

And of the latter said he—there being two,
The first Aholah, which interpreted—

Third Citizen. But, of this latter? First Citizen. Well, of her he said

How she made letters for Chaldæan folk And men that came forth of the wilder-

ness And all her sister's chosen men; yea,

she Kept not her lip from any sin of

hers,
But multiplied in whoredoms toward
all these

That hate God mightily; for these, he saith,

These are the fair French people, and these her kin

Sought out of England with her loveletters

To bring them to her kiss of love; and thus

With a prayer made that God would break such love

Ended some while; then crying out for strong wrath

Spake with a great voice after: This is she,

Yea the lewd woman, yea the same woman

That gat bruised breasts in Egypt, when strange men

Swart from great suns, foot-burnt with angry soils,

And strewn with sand of gaunt Chaldæan miles,

Poured all their love upon her: she shall drink
The Lord's cup of derision that is

The Lord's cup of derision that is filled

With drunkenness and sorrow, great of sides

And deep to drink in till the dreg drips out:

Yea, and herself with the twain shards thereof

Pluck off her breasts; so said he. Fourth Citizen. See that stir —

Are not they come?

Third Citizen. There wants an hour of them.

Draw near, and let us hearken; he will speak

Surely some word of this.

Second Citizen. What saith he now? The Preacher. The mercy of a harlot is a sword.

And her mouth sharper than a flame of fire.

#### Scene II. - In Prison.

Chastelard. So here my time shuts up; and the last light

Has made the last shade in the world for me.

The sunbeam that was narrow like a leaf

Has turned a hand, and the hand stretched to an arm,

And the arm has reached the dust on the floor, and made

A maze of motes with paddling fingers. Well,

I knew not that a man so sure to die Could care so little; a bride-night's lustiness Leaps in my veins as light fire under a wind:

As if I felt a kindling beyond death Of some new joys far outside of me

Sweet sound, sweet smell and touch of

things far out
Sure to come soon. I wonder will
death be

Even all it seems now? or the talk of

And wretched changes of the worn-out soul

Nailed to decaying flesh, shall that be true?

Or is this like the forethought of deep sleep

Felt by a tired man? Sleep were good enough —

Shall sleep be all? But I shall not forget

For any sleep this love bound upon me -

For any sleep or quiet ways of death.

Ah! in my weary dusty space of sight

Her face will float with heavy scents of
hair

And fire of subtle amorous eyes, and

More hot than wine, full of sweet wicked words

Babbled against mine own lips, and long hands

Spread out, and pale bright throat and pale bright breasts,

Fit to make all men mad. I do believe This fire shall never quite burn out to the ash,

And leave no heat and flame upon my dust

For witness where a man's heart was burnt up.

For all Christ's work this Venus is not quelled.

But reddens at the mouth with blood of men,

Sucking between small teeth the sap o' the veins,

Dabbling with death her little tender lips—

A bitter beauty, poisonous-pearled mouth.

I am not fit to live but for love's sake,

So I were best die shortly. Ah! fair love,

Fair fearful Venus made of deadly foam,

I shall escape you somehow with my death,—

Your splendid supple body and mouth on fire,

And Paphian breath that bites the lips with heat.

I had best die.

Enter MARY BEATON.

What! is my death's time come,

And you the friend to make death kind to me?
'Tis sweetly done: for I was sick for

'Tis sweetly done; for I was sick for this.

Mary Beaton. Nay, but see here; nay, for you shall not die:

She has reprieved you; look, her name to that,

A present respite; I was sure of her: You are quite safe: here, take it in your hands:

I am faint with the end of pain. Read there.

Chastelard. Reprieve?

Wherefore reprieve? Who has done this to me?

Mary Beaton. I never feared but God would have you live,

Or I knew well God must have punished me;

But I feared nothing, had no sort of fear. What makes you stare upon the seal so hard?

Will you not read now?

Chastelard. A reprieve of life -

Reprieving me from living. Nay, by God,

I count one death a bitter thing enough.

Mary Beaton. See what she writes;
your love; for love of you;

Out of her love; a word to save your life:

But I knew this too though you love me not:

She is your love; I knew that: yea, by heaven.

Chastelard. You knew I had to live and be reprieved:

Say I were bent to die now?

Mary Beaton. Do not die,

For her sweet love's sake; not for pity of me,

You would not bear with life for me one hour:

But for hers only.

Chastelard. Nay, I love you well,

I would not hurt you for more lives than one.

But for this fair-faced paper of reprieve, We'll have no riddling to make death shift sides:

Look, here ends one of us. [Tearing it. For her I love,

She will not anger heaven with slaying

me;

For me, I am well quit of loving her; For you, I pray you be well comforted, Seeing in my life no man gat good by

And by my death no hurt is any man's.

Mary Beaton. And I that loved you?

nay, I loved you; nay,

Why should your like be pitied when they love?

Her hard heart is not yet so hard as

yours, Nor God's hard heart. I care not if

you die.

These bitter madmen are not fit to live. I will not have you touch me, speak to me.

Nor take farewell of you. See you die well,

Or death will play with shame for you, and win,

And laugh you out of life. I am right glad

I never am to see you an, more,

For I should come to hate you easily; I would not have you live. [Exit. Chastelard. She has cause enow.

I would this wretched waiting had an end,

For I wax feebler than I was: God knows

I had a mind once to have saved this flesh,

And made life one with shame. It marvels me

This girl that loves me should desire so much

To have me sleep with shame for bedfellow A whole life's space; she would be glad to die To escape such life. It may be, too, her

love
Is but an amorous quarrel with herself,

Not love of me, but her own wilful soul, Then she will live, and be more glad of this

Than girls of their own will and their heart's love

Before love mars them: so God go with her!

For mine own love — I wonder will she come

Sad at her mouth a little, with drawn cheeks

And eyelids wrinkled up? or hot and quick
To lean her head on mine and leave hor

To lean her head on mine and leave her lips

Deep in my neck? For surely she must come;

And I should fare the better to be sure What she will do. But as it please my sweet;

For some sweet thing she must do if she come,

Seeing how I have to die. Now three years since,

This had not seemed so good an end for me; But in some wise all things wear round

betimes, And wind up well. Yet doubtless she

might take
A will to come my way, and hold my hands.

And kiss me some three kisses, throat, mouth, eyes,

And say some soft three words to soften death:

I do not see how this should break her ease.

Nay, she will come to get her warrant back:

By this no doubt she is sorely penitent, Her fit of angry mercy well blown out, And her wits cool again. She must

have chafed A great while through for anger to be-

come
So like pure pity: they must have fret

So like pure pity; they must have fret ted her Nigh mad for anger: or it may be mistrust,

She is so false; yea, to my death I think

She will not trust me; alas the hard sweet heart!

As if my lips could hurt her any way But by too keenly kissing of her own! Ah! false poor sweet fair lips that keep no faith.

They shall not catch mine false or dangerous:

They must needs kiss me one good time, albeit

They love me not at all. Lo, here she comes,

For the blood leaps and catches at my face:

There go her feet, and tread upon my heart;

Now shall I see what way I am to die. Enter the QUEEN.

Queen. What! is one here? Speak to me, for God's sake:

Where are you lain?

Chastelard. Here, madam, at your hand.

Queen. Sweet lord, what sore pain have I had for you,

And been most patient! — Nay, you are not bound.

If you be gentle to me, take my hand.

Do you not hold me the worst heart in
the world?

Nay, you must needs; but say not yet you do.

I am worn so weak, I know not how I live:

Reach me your hand.

Chastelard. Take comfort and good heart;

All will find end; this is some grief to you,

But you shall overlive it. Come, fair love;

Be of fair cheer: I say you have done no wrong.

Queen. I will not be of cheer: I have done a thing

That will turn fire and burn me. Tell me not:

If you will do me comfort, whet your sword.

But if you hate me, tell me of sof things,

For I hate these, and bitterly. Look up;

Am I not mortal to be gazed upon?

Chastelard. Yea, mortal, and not hater

Queen. O lost heart!

Give me some mean to die by. Chastelard. Sweet, enough.

You have made no fault; life is not worth a world,

That you should weep to take it: would mine were,

And I might give you a world-worthier gift

Than one poor head that love has made a spoil;

Take it for jest, and weep not: let me

And think I died of chance or malady.

Nay, I die well; one dies not best abed.

Queen. My warrant to reprieve you—

that you saw?

That came between your hands? Chastelard. Yea, not long since.

It seems you have no will to let me die.

Queen. Alas! you know I wrote it
with my heart,

Out of pure love; and since you were in bonds,

I have had such grief for love's sake and my heart's,—

Yea, by my life I have, — I could not choose

But give love way a little. Take my hand;

You know it would have pricked my heart's blood out

To write reprieve with.

Chastelard. Sweet, your hands are kind;

Lay them about my neck, upon my face, And tell me not of writing.

Queen. Nay, by heaven,

I would have given you mine own blood to drink

If that could heal you of your soulsickness.

Yea, they know that, they curse me for your sake,

Rail at my love — Would God their heads were lopped,

And we twain left together this side death!

But look you, sweet, if this my warrant

You are but dead and shamed; for you must die,

And they will slay you shamefully by force

Even in my sight.

Chastelard. Faith, I think so they will.

Queen. Nay, they would slay me too, cast stones at me,

Drag me alive; they have eaten poisonous words,

They are mad, and have no shame. Chastelard. Ay, like enough.

Queen. Would God my heart were greater! but God wot

I have no heart to bear with fear, and

Yea, and I cannot help you: or I

I should be nobler, bear a better heart: But as this stands — I pray you for good love,

As you hold honor a costlier thing than life —

Chastelard. Well?

Queen. Nay, I would not be denied for shame;
In brief, I pray you give me that again.

Chastelard. What, my reprieve?
Queen. Even so; deny me not,
For your sake mainly: yea by God you

For your sake mainly: yea, by God you know

How fain I were to die in your death's stead.

For your name's sake. This were no need to swear.

Lest we be mocked to death with a reprieve,

And so both die, being shamed. What!

shall I swear?
What, if I kiss you? must I pluck it

out?

You do not love me: no, nor honor.
Come,

know you have it about you: give it me.

Chastelard. I cannot yield you such a thing again; Not as I had it. Queen. A coward? what shift now?
Do such men make such cravens?

Chastelard. Chide me not: Pity me that I cannot help my heart.

Queen. Heaven mend mine eyes that took you for a man!
What, is it sewn into your flesh? take

heed—

Nay, but for shame — what have you done with it?

Chastelard. Why, there it lies, torn up. Queen. God help me, sir!

Have you done this?

Chastelard. Yea, sweet; what should
I do?

Did I not know you to the bone, my sweet?

God speed you well! you have a goodly lord.

Queen. My love, sweet love, you are more fair than he,

Yea, fairer many times: I love you much,

Sir, know you that?

Chastelard. I think I know that well. Sit here a little till I feel you through In all my breath and blood for some

sweet while.
O gracious body that mine arms have

had, And hair my face has felt on it! grave

And low thick lids that keep since years agone

In the blue sweet of each particular vein

Some special print of me! I am right glad

That I must never feel a bitterer thing Than your soft curled-up shoulder and amorous arms

From this time forth; nothing can hap to me

Less good than this for all my whole life through.

I would not have some new pain after this

this Come spoil the savor. Oh, your round

bird's throat,

More soft than sleep or singing; your
calm cheeks,

Turned bright, turned wan with kisses hard and hot;

The beautiful color of your deep curved hands,

Made of a red rose that had changed to white;

That mouth mine own holds half the sweetness of,

Yea, my heart holds the sweetness of it, whence

My life began in me, — mine that ends

Because you have no mercy; nay, you know

You never could have mercy. My fair love,

Kiss me again, God loves you not the less;

less; Why should one woman have all goodly

things?
You have all beauty; let mean women's

Be pitiful, and speak truth: they will not be

Such perfect things as yours. Be not ashamed

That hands not made like these that

Should do men good, give alms, relieve men's pain:

You have the better, being more fair than they;

They are half foul, being rather good than fair;

You are quite fair: to be quite fair is best.

Why, two nights hence I dreamed that I could see

In through your bosom, under the left flower,

And there was a round hollow, and at heart

A little red snake sitting, without spot,
That bit—like this, and sucked up
sweet—like this,

And curled its lithe light body right and left,

And quivered like a woman in act to love.

Then there was some low fluttered talk

Then there was some low fluttered talk i' the lips,

Faint sound of soft fierce words caressing them -

Like a fair woman's when her love gets way.

Ah! your old kiss — I know the ways of it:

Let the lips cling a little. Take them

And speak some word, or I go mad with love.

Queen. Will you not have my chaplain come to you?

Chastelard. Some better thing of yours, — some handkerchief,

Some fringe of scarf to make confession to.

You had some book about you that fell out —

Queen. A little written book of Ronsard's rhymes,

His gift, I wear in there for love of him -

See, here between our feet.

Chastelard. Ay, my old lord's, —

The sweet chief poet, my dear friend long since?

Give me the book. Lo you, this verse of his:

With coming lilies in late April came Her body, fashioned whiter for their shame:

And roses, touched with blood since Adon bled,

From her fair color filled their lips with red:

A goodly praise: I could not praise you so.

I read that while your marriage-feast went on.

Leave me this book, I pray you: I would read

The hymn of death here over ere I die;

I shall know soon how much he knew of death

When that was written. One thing I know now:

I shall not die with half a heart at least,

Nor shift my face, nor weep my fault alive;

Nor swear, if I might live, and do new deeds,

I would do better. Let me keep the book.

Queen. Yea, keep it: as would God you had kept your life

Out of mine eyes and hands! I am wrung to the heart.

This hour feels dry and bitter in my

mouth,

As if its sorrow were my body's food More than my soul's. There are bad thoughts in me,—

Most bitter fancies biting me like birds That tear each other. Suppose you

need not die?

Chastelard. You know I cannot live for two hours more.

Our fate was made thus ere our days were made:

Will you fight fortune for so small a grief?

But for one thing I were full fain of death.

Queen. What thing is that?

Chastelard. None need to name the thing.

Why, what can death do with me fit to

fear?

For if I sleep I shall not weep awake; Or, if their saying be true of things to come,

Though hell be sharp, in the worst ache

I shall be eased, so God will give me

back Sometimes one golden gracious sight

of you —
The aureole woven flower-like through

your hair,

And in your lips the little laugh as red As when it came upon a kiss and ceased, Touching my mouth.

Queen. As I do now, this way;
With my heart after: would I could
shed tears!

Tears should not fail when the heart shudders so.

But your bad thought?

Chastelard. Well, such a thought as this:

It may be, long time after I am dead, For all you are, you may see bitter days;

God may forget you, or be wroth with

Then shall you lack a little help of me, And I shall feel your sorrow touching you, A happy sorrow, though I may not touch,—

I that would fain be turned to flesh

again,
Fain get back life to give up life for

Fain get back life to give up life for you,

To shed my blood for help, that long

You shed and were not holpen; and your heart

Will ache for help and comfort, yea for love,

And find less love than mine — for I do think

You never will be loved thus in your life.

Queen. It may be man will never love me more;

For I am sure I shall not love man twice.

Chastelard. I know not: men must love you in life's spite;

For you will always kill them; man by

Your lips will bite them dead; yea, though you would,

You shall not spare one; all will die of you;

I cannot tell what love shall do with these,

But I for all my love shall have no might To help you more, mine arms and hands no power

To fasten on you more. This cleaves my heart,

That they shall never touch your body more.

But for your grief — you will not have to grieve;

For being in such poor eyes so beautiful

It must needs be as God is more than I So much more love he hath of you than mine;

Yea, God shall not be bitter with my love,

Seeing she is so sweet.

Queen. Ah! my sweet fool,

Think you, when God will ruin me for sin,

My face of color shall prevail so much With him, so soften the toothed iron's edge

To save my throat a scar? nay, I am sure

I shall die somehow sadly.

Chastelard. This is pure grief;

The shadow of your pity for my death, Mere foolishness of pity: all sweet moods

Throw out such little shadows of themselves,

Leave such light fears behind. You, die like me?

Stretch your throat out that I may kiss all round

Where mine shall be cut through: suppose my mouth

The axe-edge to bite so sweet a throat

in twain With bitter iron, should not it turn soft As lip is soft to lip?

Queen. I am quite sure

I shall die sadly some day, Chastelard; I am quite certain.

Chastelard. Do not think such things; Lest all my next world's memories of

you be As heavy as this thought.

Queen. I will not grieve you;

Forgive me that my thoughts were sick with grief.

What can I do to give you ease at heart?

Shall I kiss now? I pray you, have no

fear But that I love you.

Chastelard. Turn your face to me; I do not grudge your face this death of mine;

It is too fair - by God, you are too fair.

What noise is that?

Oueen. Can the hour be through so

I bade them give me but a little hour. Ah! I do love you! such brief space for love!

I am yours all through, do all your will with me;

What if we lay and let them take us fast,

Lips grasping lips? I dare do any thing.

Chastelard. Show better cheer: let no man see you mazed;

Make haste and kiss me cover up your throat,

Lest one see tumbled lace, and prate of it.

Enter the Guard: MURRAY, DARNLEY, MARY HAMILTON, MARY BEATON, and others with them,

Darnley. Sirs, do your charge; let him not have much time.

Mary Hamilton. Peace, lest you chafe the queen: look, her brows bend Chastelard. Lords, and all you come hither for my sake,

If while my life was with me like a friend

That I must now forget the friendship

I have done a wrong to any man of you, As it may be by fault of mine I have;

Of such an one I crave for courtesy He will now cast it from his mind and heed

Like a dead thing; considering my dead fault

Worth no remembrance further than my death.

This for his gentle honor and good-will I do beseech him, doubting not to find Such kindliness if he be nobly made And of his birth a courteous race of

You, my lord James, if you have aught

toward me -Or you, Lord Darnley - I dare fear no

Whate'er this be wherein you were aggrieved,

But you will pardon all for gentleness. Darnley. For my part - yea, well, if

the thing stand thus, As you must die - one would not bear

folk hard — And if the rest shall hold it honorable,

Why, I do pardon you. Murray. Sir, in all things

We find no cause to speak of you but

For all I see, save this your deadly fault.

I hold you for a noble perfect man.

Chastelard. I thank you, fair lord, for your nobleness.

You likewise, for the courtesy you have

I give you thanks, sir; and to all these lords

That have not heart to load me at my death.

Last, I beseech of the best queen of men,

And royallest fair lady in the world, To pardon me my grievous mortal sin Done in such great offence of her: for,

If ever since I came between her eyes She hath beheld me other than I am, Or shown her honor other than it is, Or, save in royal faultless courtesies, Used me with favors if by speech o

Used me with favor; if by speech or face,

By salutation or by tender eyes, She hath made a way for my desire to

live,
Given ear to me or boldness to my
breath;

I pray God cast me forth before day cease,

Even to the heaviest place there is in

Yea, if she be not stainless toward all

I pray this axe that I shall die upon May cut me off body and soul from heaven.

Now for my soul's sake I dare pray to you:

Forgive me, madam.

Queen. Yea, I do, fair sir:

With all my heart, in all I pardon you.

Chastelard. God thank you for great mercies. — Lords, set hence;

I am right loath to hold your patience

I must not hold much longer any man's. Bring me my way, and bid me fare well forth.

[As they pass out, the QUEEN stays MARY BEATON.

Queen. Hark hither, sweet. Get back to Holyrood,

And take Carmichael with you: go both up

In some chief window whence the squares lie clear,—

Seem not to know what I shall do: mark that,— And watch how things fare under. Have good cheer;

You do not think now I can let him die?

Nay, this were shameful madness if you did,

And I should hate you.

Mory Beaton. Pray you love me, madam,

And swear you love me, and will let me live,

That I may die the quicker. Queen. Nay, sweet, see,

Nay, you shall see, this must not seem devised;

I will take any man with me, and go; Yea, for pure hate of them that hate

him: yea, Lay hold upon the headsman, and bid strike

Here on my neck; if they will have him die,

Why, I will die too: queens have died this way

For less things than his love is. Nay, I know

They want no blood; I will bring swords
to boot

For dear love's rescue though half earth were slain;

What should men do with blood? Stand fast at watch;

For I will be his ransom if I die. [Exeunt.

Scene III. — The Upper Chamber in Holyrood.

MARY BEATON seated: MARY CARMI-CHAEL at a window.

Mary Beaton. Do you see nothing?
Mary Carmichael. Nay, but swarms
of men

And talking women gathered in small space,

Flapping their gowns and gaping with fools' eyes;

And a thin ring round one that seems to speak,

Holding his hands out eagerly: no more.

Mary Beaton. Why, I hear more: I hear men shout The queen!

Mary Carmichael. Nay, no cries yet. Mary Beaton. Ahl they will cry out

When she comes forth; they should

cry out on her:

I hear their crying in my heart. Nay, sweet.

Do not you hate her? All men, if God

please,

Shall hate her one day; yea, one day, no doubt.

I shall worse hate her.

Mary Carmichael. Pray you, be at

peace;

You hurt yourself: she will be merciful; What! could you see a true man slain for you?

I think I could not; it is not like our

To have such hard sides to them. Mary Beaton. Oh, not you,

And I could nowise: there's some blood in her

That does not run to mercy as ours doth:

That fair face and the cursed heart in

Made keener than a knife for manslaying

Can bear strange things.

Mary Carmichael. Peace, for the people come.

Ah! Murray, hooded over half his face With plucked-down hat, few folk about him, eyes

Like a man angered; Darnley after him,

Holding our Hamilton above her wrist, His mouth put near her hair to whisper

And she laughs softly, looking at his feet.

Mary Beaton. She will not live long; God hath given her

Few days and evil, full of hate and love,

I see well now. Mary Carmichael. Hark, there's their cry - The queen!

Fair life and long, and good days to the queen!

Mary Beaton. Yea, but God knows. I feel such patience here

As I were sure in a brief while to die.

Mary Carmichael. She bends and laughs a little, graciously,

And turns half, talking to I know not whom -

A big man with great shoulders; ah! the face,

You get his face now, - wide and dusk. ish, yea,

The youth burnt out of it. A goodly

Thewed mightily and sunburnt to the bone;

Doubtless he was away in banishment, Or kept some march far off.

Mary Beaton. Still you see nothing? Mary Carmichael. Yea, now they

bring him forth with a great noise,

The folk all shouting, and men thrust about

Each way from him.

Mary Beaton. Ah! Lord God, bear with me.

Help me to bear a little with my love For thine own love, or give me some quick death.

Do not come down; I shall get strength again, Only my breath fails. Looks he sad or

blithe?

Not sad I doubt yet. Mary Carmichael. Nay, not sad a whit.

But like a man who losing gold or lands Should lose a heavy sorrow; his face

The eyes not curious to the right or left, And reading in a book, his hands unbound.

With short fleet smiles. The whole place catches breath,

Looking at him; she seems at point to speak:

Now she lies back, and laughs, with her brows drawn

And her lips drawn too. Now they read his crime.

I see the laughter tightening her chin: Why do you bend your body, and draw breath?

They will not slay him in her sight; I am sure

She will not have him slain.

Mary Beaton. Forth, and fear not: I was just praying to myself — one word, A prayer I have to say for her to God

If he will mind it.

Mary Carmichael. Now he looks her side;

Something he says, if one could hear thus far:

She leans out, lengthening her throat to hear,

And her eyes shining.

Mary Beaton. Ah! I had no hope;

Yea, thou God knowest that I had no hope.

Let it end quickly.

Mary Carmichael. Now his eyes are wide,

And his smile great; and like another smile

The blood fills all his face. Her cheek and neck

Work fast and hard; she must have pardoned him,

He looks so merrily. Now he comes forth

Out of that ring of people, and kneels down;

Ah! how the helve and edge of the great axe

Turn in the sunlight as the man shifts hands!

It must be for a show: because she sits
And hardly moves her head this way;
I see

Her chin and lifted lips. Now she stands up,

Puts out her hand, and they fall muttering;
Ah!

Mary Beaton. It is done now?

Mary Carmichael. For God's love,
stay there!

Do not look out. Nay, he is dead by this;

But gather up yourself from off the floor.
Will she die too? I shut mine eyes,
and heard—

Sweet, do not beat your face upon the ground.

Nay, he is dead and slain.

Mary Beaton. What! slain indeed? I knew he would be slain. Ay, through the neck:

I knew one must be smitten through the 'neck,

To die so quick: if one were stabbed to the heart,

He would die slower.

Mary Carmichael. Will you behold him dead?

Mary Beaton. Yea: must a dead man not be looked upon

That living one was fain of? give me way.

Lo you, what sort of hair this fellow

The doomsman gathers it into his hand To grasp the head by for all men to see: I never did that.

Mary Carmichael. For God's love, let

me go!

Mary Beaton. I think sometimes she
must have held it so,

Holding his head back, see you, by the hair,

To kiss his face, still lying in his arms. Ay, go and weep: it must be pitiful

If one could see it. What is this they say?

So perish the queen's traitors! Yea, but so

Perish the queen! — God, do thus much to her

For his sake only: yea, for pity's sake Do thus much with her.

Mary Carmichael. Prithee, come in with me:

Nay, come at once.

Mary Beaton. If I should meet with her,

And spit upon her at her coming in—
But if I live then shall I see one day
When God will smite her lying harlot's
mouth.—

Surely I shall. Come, I will go with

We will sit down together face to face Now, and keep silence; for this life is hard.

And the end of it is quietness at last. Come, let us go: here is no word to

An usher. Make way there for the lord of Bothwell; room,—

Place for my lord of Bothwell next the queen.

# BOTHWELL: A TRAGEDY.

πολλα μεν γα τρέφει δεινα δειμάτων άχη, πόντια, τ' άγκάλαι κνωδάλων άνταιων βροτοίσι πλαθουσι, βλαστούσι και πεδαίχμιοι λαμπαδές πεδαοροί, πτανά τε καὶ πεδοβάμονα, κάνεμοέντων αιγίδων φράσαι κότον.

άλλ' ὑπέρτολμον άνδρός φρόνημα τις λέγοι, και γυναικών φρεσίν τλημόνων ; καὶ παντόλμους έρωτας άταισι συννόμους βροτών, Ευζύγους θ' ομαυλίας; θηλυκρατής απέρωτος έρως παρανικά κνωδάλων τε καὶ Βροτών. AESCH. Cho. 585-601.

#### A VICTOR HUGO.

COMME un fleuve qui donne à l'océan son âme, J'apporte au lieu sacré d'où le vers tonne et luit Mon drame épique et plein de tumulte et de

Ou vibre un siècle éteint, où flotte un jour qui

Un peuple qui rugit sous les pieds d'une femme Passe, et son souffle emplit d'aube et d'ombre et de bruit

Un ciel apre et guerrier qui luit comme une lame Sur l'avenir debout, sur le passé détruit.

Au fond des cieux hagards, par l'orage battue, Une figure d'ombre et d'étoiles vêtue Pleure et menace et brille en s'évanouissant;

Eclair d'amour qui blesse et de haine qui tue, Fleur éclose au sommet du siècle eblouissant, Rose à tige épineuse et que rougit le sang.

The younger RUTHVEN.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARY STUART. MARY BEATON. MARY SEVTON. MARY CARMICHAEL. JANE GORDON, Countess of Bothwell. JANET STUART, Countess of Argyle. MARGARET LADY DOUGLAS of Lochleven. LADY RERES. HENRY LORD DARNLEY, King Consort. JAMES HEPBURN, Earl of Bothwell. JAMES STUART, Earl of Murray.

JAMES DOUGLAS, Earl of Morton. WILLIAM MAITLAND of Lethington, Secretary of State. JOHN KNOX.

DAVID RIZZIO.

The Earls of Huntley, Argyle, Caithness, Rothes, Cassilis, Athol., and Mar. Lords HERRIES, LINDSAY, RUTHVEN, FLEM-ING, SEYTON, BOYD, OCHILTREE, HUME,

ARBROATH, and MAXWELL

THE MASTER OF OCHILTREE, son to Lord Ochiltree. THE MASTER OF MAXWELL, son to Lord Her ries. SIR JAMES MELVILLE. SIR ROBERT MELVILLE. SIR GEORGE DOUGLAS, uncle to Darnley. SIR WILLIAM DOUGLAS of Lochleven. GEORGE DOUGLAS, his brother. SIR WILLIAM KIRKALDY of Grange. LORD ROBERT STUART, Abbot of St. Cross. Du CROC, Ambassador from France. SIR NICHOLAS THROGMORTON, Ambassador

from England. JOHN HAMILTON, Archbishop of St. Andrew's.

John Leslie, Bishop of Ross.
Arthur Erskine, Captain of the Guard.
Anthony Standen and Stuart of TraQuair, Equeries.

JOHN ERSKINE of Dun.
ANDREW KER of Fauldonside.
HENRY DRUMMOND of Ricarton.
ARCHIBALD BEATON.

JOHN HEPBURN of Bolton, ORMISTON, HAY of Talla, Conspirators with Bothwell.
CRAWFORD, NELSON, TAYLOR, servants to

Darnley.

TIME, MARCH 9, 1566, TO MAY 16, 1568.

## ACT I. - DAVID RIZZIO.

SCENE I. - HOLYROOD.

Enter DARNLEY and MARY CARMI-CHAEL.

Darnley. But you will not believe me though you hear; You have no faith: you steer by sight,

and see

This fellow gilt and garnished with her grace

Sit covered by the queen where lords stand bare,

And jet before them lordlier; and the sight

Makes firm your faith that in his hand and eye

This land is but a harp to play upon, Whose strings may turn to serpents or to swords,

To maim his hand or charm his eye to death.

You have no faith to see this, or to read

The sentence that ensuing shall write me king,

And worth men's fears or faiths: lo!

As though my hope were braggart, and myself

A fool and mouthpiece of its foolish vaunt:

You have no faith.

Mary Carmichael. I have no wit nor will

To choose between St. David for my lord

And sweet St. Henry.

Darnley. Nay, King David now, King David psalmist; but for all his song

NICHOLAS HUBERT, surnamed Paris, servant to Bothwell.

THE PROVOST OF EDINBURGH.

ROBERT CUNNINGHAM, steward to the Earl of Lennox.

Page and Girl attending on Lady Lochleven. Burgesses, Citizens, Soldiers, Attendants, etc.

I doubt he hath lost the old trick of touch he had

Once in the sword-play.

Mary Carmichael. See you play not Saul,

Who are something of his stature in our eyes,

Much of his mighty presence; be it not said

He hath snipt your skirts already.

Darnley. Who said that?

Who speaks of me so, lies to the blood and bone,

To the heart and soul lies. I am no king mayhap,—

I do not say yet I shall die no king:

God knows that, and is wise, — but man I am,

Look else, who love you -

Mary Carmichael. Sir, be king for me,

It shall content my will to you-ward, seeing

I take you to be royal, and myself Honest.

Darnley. Why honest? what a gibe is this?

What make you of me?

Mary Carmichael. Yea, what should I make?

'Tis time I were on service.

Darnley. Oh, the queen's?

She gets good service, excellent service done,

And worthy servants hath she, — a liberal queen.

Well, if you will.

[Exit MARY CARMICHAEL I would the mouth were out.

If earth were easier by just one less knave,

I might sleep well and laugh and walk at ease,

With none to mate me.

Enter MORTON.

Ah! my good lord and friend, I had somewhat I would say—but let words be.

The man you know of, I would you had made him safe;

I would have told you this much.

Morton. Sir, the earl

Murray being with us in the main thing here,

Though he keep hand from the red handiwork.

Shall enough help us.

Darnley. Let him know it not, then: Let him stand by: he must not know it. Why, well,

It is the more our honor: yet would

God

He, being not with us, were not anywhere,

But dead, sir, dead! I say, who hath eyes to see

May see him dangerous to us, and manifest.

Ve have no eyes who see not: for my part,

noted him at once. Sir, by this light,

When I first saw him — and I have eyes to see — I knew what manner of meaning in his

face Lay privy and folded up and sealed and

signed.
I would you lords had sight and heart

like mine:
He should not long live dangerous;

yet, God wot, For my poor personal peril I would

This body against his better.

Morton. There's no need

Of iron words and matches here of men,

Save this we meet upon; which being played out

Leaves our hands full and henceforth peaceable.

For the earl, he makes no part of men's designs,

Nor would I have you keen to strive with him

Who lies yet still, and is well liked of men

That are well-willers to this common

That are well-willers to this common state

And the open peace of the people. Let him be;

Keep your heart here.

Darnley. Here is it fixed and set

With roots of iron. 'Tis more hone' to us,

Being so more perilous, to have no help Of popular hands and common friendliness,

But our hearts helpful only. I am sure of her,

That she suspects not, — I do surely think:

But yet she is subtle and secret-souled and wise,

Wise woman-fashion; look you, be not caught Through too much trust in what of her

is weak,—

In her light mind and mutability; For subtlety lies close in her light wit,

And wisdom wantons in her wantonness:

I know her, I know her; I have seen her ere now, and am

Not all to learn in women.

Morton. I believe

Your grace hath grace with women as with men,

And skill of sense alike in those and these,

I doubt not; which is well and profitable.

For this, how shall she know it, except

you slip And let her wring the truth out from

your hand,

Or kiss the truth out, hanging mouth on mouth?

But if no pressure press from hand or lip

The unripe truth, the fruit so soon so red,

What can she to us, though doubting help or harm,—

How, if she know not surely? Darnley. So I say.

And we that do it, we do it for all men's good,

For the main people's love, thankworthily -

And this is matter of law we take in hand.

Is it not, lawful? for the man is judged, Doomed dead and damned by sentence, in good deed,

Though not by scruple and show of trial and test,

By clearer cause and purer policy-

We cannot stand toward any accountable,

As for a slaughter, a treasonable shame, To mark us red in the world's eyes? no man

Can say our fame is blotted with his blood.

No man, albeit he hate us, bring in doubt, -

Woman or man, - our right, our absolute law.

Giving us leave - nay, bidding us do

So that we stand after the deed as now, In no more danger or fear?

Morton. In less fear, you,

And much more honor; now it might please you fear, Being overborne of woman and fast

With feminine shame and weakness;

the man's strength, The sinew and nerve and spirit of royalty,

Hers, and all power to use her power on you

Hers, and all honor and pleasure of high place

That should make sweet your lips and bright your brows

Hers, and the mockery of mismarried

Yours.

Darnley. Nay, by God I said so; why, I knew it:

I told you thus aforetime, did I not? Morton. Truly and wisely; if this content you thus,

He is even our king.

Darnley. king,

And I, God wot, content. Here came

Some few days back, a goodly, a gentle-

An honorable, that for king knave's behoof

Was stript out of the better of all his lands

As I of what was best part of my wife, My place, and honor that grows up with hers -

For of her love small fruit was left to strip,

Few leaves for winter weather - but of these.

These good things, am I stript as bare as shame,

Even beggared as was this man. God's light,

It seems this is but justice, doth it not, And I so gentle and temperate — as, by God,

I was not nor I will not.

Morton. There's more need

That you seem resolutely temperate then, And temperately be resolute, I say,

Till the hour to cast off temperance and put on

Plain passion for the habit of your heart, Which now it wears in darkness, and by day

The cloak and hood of temperance. But these fits

And gusts and starts of will and will not, these

Blow you this side and that side till men see

Too much, and trust too little. Darnley. O sir, you are wise,

You are honorable, and a counsellor, and my friend,

And I too light, too light - yet by this light

I think I am worth more than your counsel is

If I be worth this work here to be done -

I think I am so much.

Morton. It may well be, sir,

And you much wiser; yet forbear your wrath

Methinks he should be If you would have it ready to your hand.

Darnley. I will forbear nothing nor nothing bear -

Nor live by no man's bidding. This year through

I have even been surfeited with wise men's breath

And winds of wordy weather round mine ears, -

Do this, spare that, walk thus, look otherwise.

Hold your head kingly, or wisely bow

your neck: A man might come to doubt himself no

Being so long childlike handled. look you.

Look she, look God to it if I be not man!

Now is my way swept, and my foot shod now.

My wallet full now for the travelling day That I fare forth and forward, arrow straight,

Girt for the goal, red battle-ripe at

need — As need there is — you are sure — and utter need?

Morton. Is my lord not sure? Darnley. Ay, as sure as you, —

Surer, maybe: the need is more of mine, -

This grazes your bare hand that grates my heart. Your queen it is wrongs you, and me

my wife. Morton. You see that sure, too?

sharp sight, have you not? Darnley. I saw it, I first - I knew her - who knew her but I,

That swore, — at least, I swore to mine own soul.

Would not for shame's sake swear out wide to the world,

But in myself swore with my heart to hear. —

There was more in it, in all their commerce, more

Than the mere music: he is warped, worn through,

Bow-bent, uncomely in wholesome eyes that see

Straight, seeing him crooked; but she Not as I took it - I had else been seeing awry

Sees the man straight enough for para-

This I saw, this I swore too - silently, Not loud but sure, till time should be to speak

Sword's language, no fool's jargon like his tongue,

But plain broad steel speech and intelligible,

Though not to the ear, Italian's be it or Scot's.

But to the very life intelligible,

To the loosed soul, to the shed blood for blood

There must be - one must slay him you are sure - as I am?

For I was sure of it always: while you said,

All you, 'twas council-stuff, state-handicraft. Cunning of card-play between here and

I knew 'twas this and more, sir; I kept sight,

Kept heed of her, what thing she was, what wife. What manner of stateswoman and gov-

erness -

More than all you saw - did you see i-

Morton. You saw first surely, and some one spoke first out -You had eyes, he tongue - and both

bear witness now

If this must be or not be. Darnley. Death, is that?

I must kill — bid you kill him?

Morton. Nowise, sir;

As little need of one as the other is here:

As little of either as no need at all. Darnley. You doubt or hand or

tongue, then, sir, of mine? I would not strike, if need were, or bid strike?

Morton. Neither we doubt, nor nei-

ther do we need -Having you with us.

Darnley. 'Twas but so you meant?

I had else been angry - nay, half wroth I was -

wroth indeed.

Morton. That had been grievous to me and perilous,

This time of all times.

Darnley. Ay, you need me, ay;

I am somewhat now then, somewhat more than wont,

Who thus long have been nothing — but will be?

Well, so, I am with you. Shall he die
- how soon?

To-day I had said, but haply not today —

There might fall somewhat, something slip awry,

In such swift work, ha? Then, what day? Perchance

Twere better he died abed — or were there charms,

Spells — if himself though be not witch, drug-proof

Tis like, and devil-witted, being a knave Born poisonous and bred sorcerous like his kind—

We have heard what manner of plague his south land spawns,

What sort of kith and kin to hell and him,

How subtle in starry riddles and earth's roots

The dog-leeches that kill your soul in you,

Or only body, or both, as Catherine please,

Mother that was to our Mary—have

we not?
We must look to it, and closely look.

Morton. My lord,
Of so much being so sure, of this be too;
That surely and soon in some wise very

We are quit of him with God's help or without.

Darnley. Why, that were well. hold you resolute;

I pray you stay so, and all is well enough. We have talked our time out — you had all to say —

All the thing's carriage — and my mind to take,

Which with plain heart I have made you understand.

My mind is, he must die then: keep you there. [Exit.]

Morton. Had God but plagued Egypt with fools for flies,

His Jews had sped the quicker.

Enter MARY BEATON.

Is the queen risen,

Lady?

Mary Beaton. Not yet. Was not the king with you?

I heard him high and shrill.

Merton. Ay, he was here,

If anywhere the king be. You are sad.

Mary Beaton. I am not blithe of bearing, I wot well,

But the word sad is sadder than I am.

Is he not vexed?

Morton. I have never seen him else, Save when light-heartedness and loosehung brain

Have made him proud and drunken:

He has been but seldom. There's one sad at least;

If it be sad to hang the head apart, Walk with brows drawn and eyes dis-

Walk with brows drawn and eyes disquieted,
Speak sullen under breath, and shrug

and swear,

If any move him, and then again fall

dumb;
He has changed his fresher manner,

and put off
What little grace made his ungracious

youth

Fair in men's eves a little: if this

Fair in men's eyes a little; if this last,

He will not long last in men's lordship here,

Except by love and favor shown of the queen.

Mary Beaton. There he sits strong in surety; yet men say

He is discontent, disheartened, for distaste

Of the like love and favor shown of her

(Or not the like, yet too much near the like)

Toward Rizzio; but such men, seeing visionary,

Run wide in talk, and sleep with speech awake

And sight shut fast: are you not of my mind?

Morton. I am most of theirs whose mind is most toward hers,

As whose should be most noble; but in truth

Mine own is moved to hear her gracious heart

Mismade of, her clear courtesies misread,

Misliked her liking, her good will maligned.

Even of his mouth who owes life, breath, and place,

Honor and title, even to that clear good

To that her grace, liking, and courtesy.

Mary Beaton. You mean our lord
and hers and king of Scots?

Morton. As kingly a king as masterful a lord.

And no less hers than ours; as strong each way.

Mary Beaton. And he misreads so much the queen's pure heart

As to mistake aloud her manner of life.

life, And teach the world's broad open

popular ear His graceless commentary on her mere grace

And simple favor shown a simple knave.

Her chamber-child, her varlet? a poor man,

Stranger, skilled little in great men's policies

- Which is strange too, seeing he hath had some chance

To learn some tricks of courts and embassies, Being therein bred, and not so very a

fool

But one might teach him - yet no doubt a man,

Save for such teaching, simple and innocent;

Only what heart, what spirit and wit he has,

Being hot and close as fire on the old faith's side

And the French party's - if his wit were great,

It might do more than simple service

Having her heart as 'twere by the ear which leans

Still toward his saying or singing; but ye know

There is no peril in him, and the king More fool than he a knave.

Morton. Well, I know not;

My skill is small in tunes, yet I can tell Discord between kings' ear and people's tongue,

Which hearing as in spirit I forehear Harsh future music in a state mistuned, If such men lay but hand upon the

keys,

Touch ne'er so slight a string of policy With ne'er so light a finger: I would the queen,

For the dear faith I bear her, saw but this,

Or that the lords were heavier-eyed to see.

Mary Beaton., Are they so keen of soul as of their sight,—

To slay wrong as to see wrong?

Morton. 'Faith, with us

The hand is matched against the eye for speed;
And these no slower in stroke of sight

and sword
Than their sharp-sighted swift-souled

forefathers.

I say not this that you should gather

Out of my saying to sow in the ear of the queen;

But for truth's sake; and truly I do not fear

That I have put fear in you, for you seem

Not lightly fearful to me.

Mary Beaton. I would not be,

Where I might keep good heart and open eye,

Nor blind nor fevered with foolhardiness,

As here meseems I may keep; for I see No hurt yet nor hurt's danger steer in sight,

Save the mere daily danger of highraised heads

To be mis-spoken and mis-seen of men, Which is not for high-seated hearts to

Morton. Her heart is high enough, and yours as hers:

You shall do well to hold your courage

Keeping your wits awake; whereof myself

I make no doubt, howbeit men fear the queen,

Having our bitter folk and faith to fight, Out of sharp spirit and high-heartedness May do such things for love's sake or for wrath's

As fools for fear's sake: which were no less harm

(Turning her wit and heart against herself)

Than to be coward or witless. Fare you well:

I will not doubt but she is well advised.

Mary Beaton. He is but dead by this, then. I did know it; And yet it strikes upon me sudden and

sharp. As a thing unforethought on. It is

strange To have one's foot as mine is on the

verge, The narrowing threshold of a thing so

To have within one's eyeshot the whole

The perfect reach of fate from end to

From life to life replying and death to

death This is the first hour of the night, and I

The watcher of the first watch, by whose lamp

The starless sky that grows toward birth of stars

And the unlit earth and obscure air are Pale as the iamp's self yet not well

alight. Yet by the light of my heart's fire, and

mind Kindled, I see what fires of storm, what

flaws, What windy meteors and cross-counter-

ing stars, Shall be through all the watches to the

dawn

And bloodlike sunrise of the fire-eyed day.

I am half content already; and yet I would

This watch were through.

Enter the QUEEN, RIZZIO, and MARY SEYTON.

Queen. Nay, it is later, sure:

I am idle, I am idle, and flattered: you say wrong,

To find my sloth some pardonable plea, Which is not pardonable; a perfect sin, One writ among the sorest seven of

Enough to load the soul past penitence. Am I not late indeed? speak truth and

Rizzio. To watchers the sun rises ever

late, Though he keep time with summer;

but your grace Keeps earlier than the sun's time.

Queen. 'Tis but March,

And a scant spring, a sharp and starve-

ling year. How bitter black the day grows! one

would swear The weather and earth were of this people's faith,

And their heaven colored as their thoughts of heaven,

Their light made of their love.

Rizzio. If it might please you Look out, and lift up heart to summer-

ward. There might be sun enough for seeing and sense,

To light men's eyes at, and warm hands withal.

Queen. I doubt the winter's white is deeper dyed

And closer worn than I thought like to

This land of mine hath folded itself round

With snow-cold, white, and leprous misbelief.

Till even the spirit is bitten, the blood pinched.

And the heart winter-wounded; these starved slaves

That feed on frost, and suck the snowe for drink,

Hating the light for the heat's sake, love the cold.

We want some hotter fire than summer or sun

To burn their dead blood through, and change their veins.

Rizzio. Madam, those fires are all but ashen dust.

'Tis by'the sun we have now to walk warm.

If I had leave to give good counsel tongue

And wisdom words to work with, I would say,

Rather by favor and seasonable grace Shall your sweet light of summer-speak-

ing looks
Melt the hard mould of earthen hearts,

and put Spring into spirits of snow. Your hus-

band here, Who was my friend before your lord,

being grown Doubtful, and evil-eyed against him-

self,
With a thwart wit crossing all counsel,

From us-ward to their close fierce inti-

Who are bitterest of the faction against faith,

And through their violent friendship has become

His own and very enemy, being moved Of mere loose heart to vex you. Now there stands

On the other hand, in no wise bound to him,

But as your rebel and his enemy

Cast forth condemned, one that called home again

Might be a bond between the time and you,

Tying the wild world tamer to your hand,

And in your husband's hot and unreined mouth

As bit and bridle against his wandering will.

Queen. What name is his who shall so strengthen me?

Rizzio. Your father gave him half a brother's name.

Queen. I have no brother: a blood less traitor he is

Who was my father's bastard born. By heaven,

I had rather have his head loose at my foot

Than his tongue's counsel rounded in mine ear

Rizzio. I would you had called him out of banishment.

Queen. Thou art mad, thou art mad. prate me no more of him.

Rizzio. He is wise, and we need wis dom; penitent,

And God, they say, loves most his penitents:

Stout-hearted and well-minded toward your grace,

As you shall work him, and beguilable Now at your need if you but will he be, And God he knows if there be need of such.

Queen. No need, no need: I am crowned of mine own heart,

And of mine own will weaponed; am I

To have need of traitors' leave to live by, and reign

By the God's grace of these? I will not have it;

Toward God I swear there shall be no such need.

Rizzio. Yet if there were no need, less harm it were

To have him easily on your royal side While the time serves that he may serve you in,—

Less harm than none, and profit more than less.

Queen. He is a misborn traitor and heretic;

And of his own side baffled, a flat fool, Who thought to have comfort of Elizabeth.

Large furtherance of my sweet-souled sister's love,

Grace and sure aid of her good plighted

word,.
Her honorable and precious plighted

word,
And secret seal to help him; as she
durst not.

Yea, she would fain and durst not

Rizzio. Please you note -

Queen. It shall not please me; I say she hath made him kneel,

(And this does please me indeed) hath seen him down.

Seen him and spurned him kneeling from her foot,

As my born traitor and subject. David,

But hath thy careful love not made thee mad.

Whose counsei was my sword against him once?

Why, thou wast sworn his slayer; and all that while

He held up head against us, thy one

Bade strike him dead of all men. What! hast thou

Fairly forgot his purpose, were I taken, To speed thee out of life? his secret

bond, Sealed with himself in spirit, thou

shouldst die?
Wast thou not trothplight with that souliess boy,

Ere he might thee, to rid him out of

life? Nay, and thou knowest how dear a

And thou, to slay him when the good chance comes,

Which God make speedy toward us!

Too little and light to hold up his dead head,

It was my hope to dip it in his life
Made me ride iron-mailed, a soldieress,
All those days through we drove them
here and there,

Eastward from Fife, and hither and forth again,

And broken to the border; yea, all day I thought how worth his life it were to ride

Within the shot-length of my saddlebow And try my poor and maiden soldiership.

And now I am bidden, and you it is bid me,

Reach my hand forth forgivingly and meek

To strike with his for love and policy?

He is beaten and broken, without help of hope,

Who was mine enemy ever, and ever I knew

How much he was mine enemy; and now maimed,

Wounded, unseated from his power of place,

Shall I raise up again and strengthen him,

Warm and bind up his cold and o'erbled wounds

With piteous cordials? nay, but when I do,

May he have strength to wreak his will on me,

And I be flung under his feet! beside,

He was your mocking-stock this short while since:

You swore, men tell me, Daniot told it me,—

Your ghostly man of counsel, — why, to him,

He says, you swore the bastard should not bide With you in Scotland; it made anger

at you, Put passion in their mouths who bear

you hard, That you should threaten kinglike.

Hath he moved you
To change your heart and face toward

him at once, Or do you mock, or are struck mad

indeed,
That now you turn to bid me cry him

home, Make much of him and sing him to my

side?

Rizzio. For all this, madam, if I be not mad,

It were well done to do it. He is a

Well-loved, well-counselled, and though fast in faith,

Yet howsoever in strong opinion bound, Not so much over-ridden of his own mind

As to love no man for faith's single sake;

No fire-brained preacher nor wild-witted knave.

But skilled and reared in state and soldiership.

What doth it need you to misthink of

Say it is but this jewel he sends me

That pleads his part before you; say I am his

And not your servant, or not only of

Made and again unmakable; 'tis truth, He hath given me gifts to be his counsel to you,

And I have taken, and here I plead his

Seeing my life hangs upon your life, and yours,

If it be full and even and fortunate

In spite of foes and fears and friends, must hang

On his, unbound from these and bound to you. We have done ill, having so mighty

a match, So large a wager on this turn of time,

To leave the stakes in hand of a lewd

A fool and thankless; and to save the

We must play privily, and hold secret hands.

Oueen. I will not have his hand upon my part,

Though it were safe to sweep up gold and all.

Rizzio. But till our side be strong; then cast him off.

When he hath served to strengthen youso much

You have no need of any strength of

Bear with him but till time be, and we touch The heart of the hour that brings our

chance to catch

Hope by the flying hair, and to our wheel

Bind fortune and wind-wavering maj-To shift no more in the air of any

change, But hang a steady star; then, when the

faith

Sits crowned in us that serve her, and you hold

The triple-treasured kingdom in your lap,

What shall forbid you set a sudden foot

Where it may please you, on their hearts or heads

That in their season were found service able,

And now are stones of stumbling? Time shapes all:

And service he may do you, or else offence.

Even as you handle this sharp point of time,

To turn its edge this wary way or that; And for the land and state, why, having served,

He may be seasonably stript out of these

When you would do some friend a courtesy

Who has still been found secret and Catholic.

A lantern's eye of counsel in close dark.

While he did blind man's service; but till then

Let him keep land and name, and all he will.

And blindly serve to the blind end in trust. To wake a naked fool. That this may

I am firm in faith, may it be but with

your will. Queen. He will not help us beat his

own faith down; He is no hawk to seel and then to un-

hood. Fly at strange fowl, and pluck back

blind again. Rizzio. Bethink you, madam, he only of all his kind

Stood out against men hotter in heresy, Spake down their speeches, overbore Pope Knox,

Broke with his cardinal's college of shrewd saints,

In your free faith's defence, that would have barred you

From custom of religion; and I wot,

Save for his help, small help had found my queen

From Huntley or Hamilton, her faith-

fellows,

Or any their co-worshippers with her. Oueen. Thou art ever saying them

wrong; they are stout and sure, Even they that strove for honor's sake with us:

Their one least fault I am minded to forgive;

True friends in faith, my dear own blood and kin,

No birthless bastards nor mistitled men. It pleased me bid him into banishment,

And shall not lightly please me bid him hack.

Rizzio. Yet some men banished for no less a cause.

It has been known, you have loosed from banishment

I tell you for true heart.

Queen. Nay, I well know it.

You are good and faithful to us, God quit it you,

And well of us loved back; how much, you know,

But more than is our fear of men's missaying. For me, I find no such foul faultiness

In the lord Bothwell but might well be purged

After long trial of English prison-bands And proof of loyal lips and close true heart

Whereout no gaoler could pluck dangerous speech,

And then with overpassing to and fro The strait sea wide enough to wash him white

'Twixt France and us: and all this jarring year You have seen with what a service, in

full field,

Oft in our need he hath served us; nor was it

Such matter of treason and nowise pardonable

To mix his wits with Arran's broken

with his

For high state's sake and strong-winged policy,

When he was matched with me in most men's mouths,

And found not yet for changeling or for fool.

But howsoever, it pleased me pardon

And a stout spear for warden have I

I have holp myself in help of him, who

Hath with good works undone his dead misdeeds,

And left their memory drowned in the under sea

That swept them out and washed him in again,

A man remade; and fail me whoso fails, Him I hold fast my friend; but those cast out

That rose up right between my will and

To make me thrall and bondslave to their own.

Giving me prison and them swift banishment

Whom I gave honor, and cast the crown away,

And break the old natural heart of royalty, For foul faith's sake or craft of their

miscreed; That smote with sword or speech

against all state,

Not through blind heat or stumbling hardihood, But hate of holiness and height of mind,

Hateful to kingly truth, haters of kings; Them though I pardon I would not take to trust,

Nor bind up their loose faith with my belief.

For all assurances of all men born. Besides, I hate him, singly.

Rizzio. I have said, and say:

Do you as time will turn it; time turns

Oueen. I do believe there is no man's estate

So miserable, so very a helpless thing, In their device to entrap mine hand So trodden under and overborne, as mine.

For first the man that I set up for lord, For master of mine and mate of only

Have I perforce put forth of my shamed

bed.

And broken on his brows the kingless

Finding nor head for gold nor hand for

Worth name of king or husband, but the throne

Lordless, the heart of marriage husbandless.

Through his foul follies; then in the utter world,

In the extreme range and race of my whole life

Through all changed times and places

of its change, Having one friend, I find a foe of him To my true sense and soul and spirit of

thought

That keeps in peace the things of its own peace,

Secret and surely: in faith, this frets my faith,

Distunes me into discord with myself, That you should counsel me against my soul.

I pray you, do not.

Rizzio. Nay, I will no more.

But if you take not Murray again to trust

At least in short sweet seeming for some while,

So to subdue him as with his own right hand

And all chief with him of his creed and crew,

Then, cleaving to the old counsel, suddenly Have him attainted, and being so

brought in By summons as your traitor, with good

speed Have off his head; let him not live to

Choose you sure tongues to doom him,

hands to rid. And be his slaying his sentence; for

the rest, Make to you friends Argyle and Cha- You know the reason I have, you know telherault

And such more temperate of their faction found

As may be servants to your pardoning hand

If they be separable; but anywise

In pardoning these, forgive not half his

With half their pardon; cut no branch of his,

But the root only; strike not but at heart

When you strike him: he hath done and borne too much

To live 'twixt that and this unreconciled.

Having on this hand his conspiracy,

On that your proclamation; his head priced.

His life coursed after with hot hound and horn.

His wife thrust forth hard on her travailing time,

With body soft from pangs and delicate,

To roam in winter-bound and roofless woods:

These things not wholly with your grace wiped off,

And washed with favor and fair-faced love away,

Must work within him deadly and desperate.

Queen. Now

I find your counsel in you, no strange tongue,

But the old stout speech and sure; and this same day

Will I set hand to it. I have chosen the lords

That shall attaint in council these men fled.

Of mortal treason; and some two hours hence

My tongue through their strange lips shall speak him dead

Who is only my heart's hated among men.

I am gay of heart, light as a spring south-wind,

To feed my soul with his foretasted death.

the right

And he the danger of it, being no fool, For fool he is not; I would he were but fool.

Oh, I feel dancing motions in my feet, And laughter moving merrily at my

Only to think him dead and hearsed, or hanged —

That were the better. I could dance down his life,

Sing my steps through, treading on his

dead neck, For love of his dead body and cast-out

He shall talk of me to the worm of hell.

Prate in death's ear, and with a speechless tongue,

Of my dead doings in days gone out. Sweet lord,

David, my good friend and my chancellor,

I thank you for your counsel.

Rizzio. May it be

Prosperously mine! but howsoever, I think

It were not well, when this man is put down,

Though Lethington be wily or Melville wise,

To make your stay of any other man.

Queen. I would I had no state to
need no stay,

God witness me, I had rather be reborn, And born a poor mean woman, and live low

With harmless habit and poor purity Down to my dull death-day, a shepherd's wife,

Than a queen clothed and crowned with force and fear.

Rizzio. Are you so weary of crowns, and would not be

Soon wearier waxen of sheepfolds? Queen. 'Faith, who knows?

But I would not be weary, let that be Part of my wish. I could be glad and good,

Living so low, with little labors set,
And little sleeps and watches, night
and day

Falling and flowing as small waves in low sea

From shine to shadow and back, and out and in

Among the firths and reaches of low life:

I would I were away and well. No more,

For dear love talk no more of policy. Let France and faith and envy and

England be, And kingdom go, and people: I had

And kingdom go, and people: I had rather rest

Quiet for all my simple space of life, With few friends' loves closing my life days in,

And few things known, and grace of humble ways,—

A loving little life of sweet small works.
Good faith, I was not made for other
life;

Nay, do you think it? I will not hear thereof;

Let me hear music rather, as simple a song,

If you have any, as these low thoughts of mine,

Some lowly and old-world song of quiet men.

Rizzio. Then is the time for love-

songs when the lip
Has no more leave to counsel; even so

be it;
I will sing simply, and no more counsel

you.
Queen. Be not unfriends; I have

made you wroth indeed,
Unknowing, and pray you even for my
no fault

Forgive, and give me music; I am athirst

For sweet-tongued pardon only.

Rizzio. If this be harsh,

The pardon be for fault enforced of mine.

Love with shut wings, a little ungrown love,

A blind lost love, alit on my shut heart, As on an unblown rose an unfledged dove: Feeble the flight as yet, feeble the flower. And I said, Show me if sleep or love thou art.

Or death or sorrow, or some obscurer power:

Show me thyself, if thou be some such power,

If thou he god or spirit, sorrow or love, That I may praise thee for the thing thou

And saying, I felt my soul a sudden flower

Full-fledged of petals, and thereon a dove Sitting full-feathered, singing at my heart.

Yet the song's burden heavier on my heart

Than a man's burden laid on a child's power.

power.
Surely most bitter of all sweet things thou

And sweetest thou of all things bitter, love:

And if a poppy or if a rose thy flower. We know not, nor if thou be kite or dove.

But nightingale is none, nor any dove, That sings so long nor is so hot of heart For love of sorrow or sorrow of any love; Nor all thy pain hath any or all thy power,

Nor any knows thee if bird or god thou art.

Or whether a thorn to think thee, or whether a flower.

But surely will I hold thee a glorious flower,

And thy tongue surely sweeter than the dove

Muttering in mid leaves from a fervent heart

Something divine of some exceeding love, If thou being god out of a great god's power

Will make me also the glad thing thou art.

Will no man's mercy show me where thou art,

That I may bring thee of all my fruit and flower,

That with loud lips and with a molten

I may sing all thy praises, till the dove That I desire to have within my power Fly in my bidding to my bosom, love? Clothed as with power of pinions, O my heart,

Fly like a dove, and seek one sovereign flower,

Whose thrall thou art, and sing for love of love.

Queen. It sings too southerly for this harsh north;

This were a song for summer-sleeping ears,

One to move dancing measures in men's feet

Red-shod with reek o' the vintage.
Who went there?

What! hear you not?

Mary Seyton. My lord of Bothwell's foot:

His tread rings iron, as to battle-ward. Queen. Not his, it was not. See if it be indeed.

'Twas a good song Something he had with me —

I thank you for your song — I know not what.

Let him come in. Sir, be with us to night—

I knew it was late indeed—at supper time.

Rizzio. Madam, till night I take my loyal leave.

God give you good of all things.

Queen. Doth he mock me?

I care not neither; I know not. Stay with us.

Enter BOTHWELL.

Good morrow, sir: we bade you, did we not?

Be with us after noon; 'tis not noon near,

And you are truer than your own word; and that,

'Tis a true man's and trusty.

Bothwell. True it should be; Madam, if truth be true, and I your thrall,

And truth's for your sake.

Queen. I would know of you -

I know not what - something there was to know.

I would you were not warden — as in truth

I think to unmake you — of the marches there.

'Tis a fierce office. You have a royal sword,

At least a knightly; I would not see it hacked rough

In brawling border dangers.

Bothwell. Anywhere

Hand, hilt, and edge are yours, to turn and take,

Use or throw by; you know it.

Queen. I know it indeed.

I have not many hearts with me, and hold

Precious the hearts I have and the good hands.

Ladies, we have somewhat with our servant here

That needs no counsel and no ear of yours,

So gives you leave. [Execut Maries. I know not why they are gone;

I have nothing with you secret. Bothwell. Yea, one thing;

You cannot help it; your face and speech and look

Are secret with me in my secret heart.

Queen. I know not that; I would I

did know that.
'Tis yet not twelve days since I saw

you wed
To my dear friend, and with what eye

you know Who would not, for all love that I

And suit to you, give ear to me, and be In mine own chapel at the holy mass Made one with her; for all the feast we kept,

might make

No jewel of mine bequeathed your wife might buy

Consent of you to take her wedded

After the church-rite of her faith and

And how much love went with your policy,

I cannot tell; yet was my will content That you should wed her name and house, to bring

The race of Gordon on our side again, And have its ruin rebuilded and its might Restored to do us service; so you said, And so I thought I knew your mind to stand;

Being so fast bound to me, I need not doubt

She could but hold you by the hand, and I

That had you by the heart need grudge not that,

While time gave order, and expediency Required of us allowance; but in faith I know not whether there be faith or no, Save in my heart, wherein I know too

How little wisdom is to trust in man. So comes it, as you see, for all my show,

I am ill at heart, and tired.

Bothwell. 'Tis your own blame.

Queen. Yea, now, what would you have me? I am yours to do it:

But you say nothing; yet you say too much.

My blame it is, my weary waste of breath,

My wretched hours and empty bloodless life, My sleepy vigils and my starting sleeps,

All by my fault — if it be fault to be More than all men loving, all women true.

To hunger with the foodless heart of grief,

And wither with the tearless thirst of eyes,

To wander in weak thought through unsown fields,

Past unreaped sheaves of vision: to be

Past unreaped sheaves of vision; to be blind,

Weak, sick and lame of spirit and poor of soul, And to live loveless for love's bitter

sake,
And have to food loathing, and shame

And have to food loathing, and shame for drink,

And see no cease or breach in my long life

Where these might end or die; my fault it is,

And I will kill my fault: for I that

Will live to love no living thing again.

Bothwell. As you will, then.

Queen. Nay, do not tread on me; I am lying a worm out of your way, and you

Turn back to bruise me. I am stricken

sore enough;

Do not worse wound me; I am hurt to the heart.

You change and shift quicker than all good things,

That all change quickly: I am fast, and cannot change.

If you do hold me so, fast in your

heart,

You should not surely mock me. Bothwell. I mock you not.

You are looser and lighter-tempered

than the wind, And say I mock you: 'tis you mock

yourself,
And much more me that wot not of

your mind;

What would you have, and would not.

Queen. Nothing, I,

Nothing but peace, and shall not. By my faith,

I think no man ever loved woman well. You laugh, and thrust your lips up, but 'tis truth,—

This that I think, not your light lewd man's thought,

But in my meaning it is bitter true.

By heaven, I have no heart for any on earth,

Any man else, nor any matter of man's,

But love of one man; nay, and never had.

Bothwell. I do believe it, by myself I

Who am even the self-same natured; so I know it.

Queen. What heart have you to hurt me? I am no fool

To hate you for your heat of natural heart.

I know you have loved and love not all alike,

But somewhat all; I hate you not for that.

When have I made words of it? sought

out times
To wrangle with you? crossed you with

To wrangle with you? crossed you with myself?

What have I said, what done, by saying or deed

To vex you for my love's sake? and have been For my part faithful beyond reach of

faith,

Kingdomless queen, and wife unhus-

banded,

Till in you reigning I might reign and rest.

I have kept my body, yea from wedded bed,

And kept mine hand, yea from my sceptre's weight,

That you might have me and my kingdom whole:

What have these done to take you, what to keep,

Worth one day's doing of mine yet?

Ah! you know,

For all the shape and show of things

For all the shape and show of things without,

For all the marriage and the bodily bond

And fleshly figure of community,

I have loved no man, man never hath had me whole, I am virgin toward you: O my love,

love, love,
This that is not yours in me I abhor,

I pray God for your sake it may be false,

Foolish and foul: I would not have it man,

Not manlike, and not mine, it shall not be, Being none of love's, and rootless in

my soul, Not growing of my spirit but my blood;

I hate myself till it be born.

Bothwell. Ay, sweet,

You talk now loud of love; but ten days since

Was I not bid love well your friend, and be

True husband to her? what sweettongued preacher then

Taught me how faith should best be kept by change

Of passionate fear and pleasure and bright pain

And all their strange sharp sweet so licitudes

For such good gifts as wisdom gives and takes

From hand to married hand of them that wed?

Whose counsel was this wisdom? whose command

This that set sorrow and silence as one seal

On the shut lips of foolishness and love?

Queen. I bade you not be wise; or, if
I bade.

It was to be obeyed not.

Bothwell. Then indeed

I did obey not, who did foolishly

To do your bidding.

Queen. Mine? did I say, Go? Did I say, Love her? did I say, Hate

Ms you must hate to love her. Yea,

I said all this; I know not if I said;
But all this have you done; I know
that well.

Bothwell. Indeed I have done all this if aught I have,

And loved at all or loathed, save what mine eye

Hath ever loathed or loved since first it saw

That face which taught it faith, and made it first

Think scorn to turn and look on change, or see How hateful in my love's sight are their

That give love's light to others.

Queen. Tell her so,

Not me; I care not though you love your wife

So well that all strange women's eyes and mine

Are hateful to you. Oh, what heart

have I,
That jest and wrangle? but indeed I

You should do well to love her not, but wed.

And make you strong, and get us friends — but, nay,

God knows I know not what I thought, or why,

When you should wed her: now I think but this,

That if one love not, she does well to die;

And if one love, she does not well to live.

I pray you, go; not for my love who pray,

But that for love's sake we thought well to part,

And if we loved not it was well indeed. Go.

Bothwell. To what end? and whither? whencesoe'er,

I must come back.

Queen. Not to my feet, not mine; Where should his end be for a married

man

To lie down lightly, with all care cast off,

And sleep more sound than in love's lap? for sleep

Between the two fair fiery breasts of, love

Will rest his head not oft, nor oft shut eyes,

They say, that love's have looked on. Bothwell. By that law,

Mine eyes must wake forever.

Queen. Nay, for shame,

Let not the fire in them that feeds on'

Strike fire upon my cheeks: turn off their heat;

It takes my breath like flame, and smothers me.

What! when I bid?

Bothwell. You have bid me do before

What you have chid me doing, but never yet

A thing so past all nature hard, now

Shall chide me for obedience.

Queen. Well - ah me! -

I lack the heart to chide; I have borne too much,

And haply too much loved. Alas! and now

I am fain too much to show it; but he that made

Made me no liar, nor gave me craft with power

To choose what I might hide at will, or show.

I am simple-souled and sudden in my speech.

Too swift and hot of heart to guard my lips

Or else lie lightly: wherefore while I

Till my time come to speak of hate or love.

I will be dumb, patient as pity's self Gazing from Godward down on things of the earth.

And dumb till the time be: would I were God!

Time should be quicker to lend help and hand

To men that wait on him. I will not wait.

Lest I wait over-long, no more than need, -

By my long love, I will not. Were I a man,

I had been by this a free man.

Bothwell. Be content.

If I have any wit of soldiership,

'Tis not far off from this to the iron day

That sets on the edge of battle, the bare blow.

All that we fight or fret for. 'Tis not

Men will bear long with their own lingering hopes

And hearts immitigable, and fiery fears That burn above dead ashes of things quenched

Hotter for danger, and light men forth to fight.

And from between the breaking ranks of war

The flower must grow of all their fears

and hopes, -Hopes of high promise, fears made

quick by faith, Angers, ambitions; which to gather and wear

Must be our toil and garland. Queen. My heart's lord,

content

I put my heart and hands into your hand

To hold and help: do you what thing in the world Shall seem well to you with them, they Let me go hence, and weep not.

Live with your love, or die. For my one part,

I would I had done with need of for ging words,

That I might keep truth pure upon my

I am weary of lying, and would not speak word more

To mock my heart with, and win faith from men,

But for the truth's sake of my love, which lies

To save the true life in me.

Bothwell. It may be

You shall not long need to dress love in lies:

This plighted plague of yours hath few men friends

To put their bodies between death and his.

Queen. Nay, I think not; and we shall shape us friends Out of the stuff of their close enmi-

ties.

he walks inwoven and Wherewith wound about

To the edge and end of peril; yet God knows

If I for all my cause would seek his death, Whose lips have stained me with report

as foul As seem to mine their kisses, that like

brands Sear my shamed face with fire to think

on them; Yet would I rather let him live, would

God. Without mine honor or my conscience

Divide from mine his star, or bid it set, And on my life lift up that light in heaven

That is my day of the heart, my sun of

soul, To shine till night shut up those loving

eyes, That death could turn not from it

though the fire Were quenched at heart that fed them.

Nay, no more :

[Exit

Bothwell. Fire, in faith,

Enough to light him down the way of the worm,

And leave me warmer. She went suddenly:

Doth she doubt yet? I think, by God's light, no:

I hold her over-fast by body and soul, — Flesh holds not spirit closer. Now what way

To shift him over the edge and end of life,

She laughs and talks of, yet keep fast

my foot On the strait verge of smooth-worn

stony things
That we stand still or slide on? 'Tis

a shoal Whereon the goodliest galleon of man's

hope,
That had no burning beacon such as

mine
Lit of her love to steer by, could not

choose to steer by, could not

But run to wreck.

Re-enter MARY BEATON.
Mary Beaton. Pray you, my lord, a

word.

If you know aught of any new thing

here, You will not be about the court to-

night:
If not, of my good will I counsel you,
Make hence in speed and secret, and
have hope

Till the next day lighten your days to come.

Bothwell. I had rather the close moon and stars a-night

Lit me to love-bed: what warm game is here,

That I must keep mine hand out?

Mary Beaton. Such a game

As you shall win and play not, or my wit Is fallen in sickness from me. Sir, you

I am your friend, I have your hap at heart.

Glad of your good, and in your crosses crossed:

I pray you trust me, and be close and wise.

For love of your own luck.

Bothwell. Tell me one thing:

What hand herein shall Master David hold?

Mary Beaton. I think he will not hold the like alive. [Exeunt.

#### SCENE II. - THE HIGH STREET.

BURGESSES and PEOPLE.

First Citizen. Was it not shown long since when she came in,

If God were glad of her? Two days and nights

Ere she brought strife among us, and again

Two nights and days when first we saw her face,

We saw not once by day the sun's in heaven,

The moon's by night, or any space of stars,

But thick sick mist corrupting the moist

With drench of darkness, so that scarce at noon

Might man spy man a bow-shot's length away;

And in man's memory on that day of the year

Was never a more dolorous face of heaven

Seen so to scowl on summer, as to speak
What comfort shall come with her to
this land;

But then were most eyes blind.

Second Citizen. These five years since Has God filled full of signs that they might see,

And sent his plagues to open them; and most,

This year or twain what portents of his

Have writ us down in heaven and trembling earth

For fearful flatterers and for faithless friends

friends Whose fear and friendship have no part

in him,
Who knows not or can read not?
Famine, frost,

Storms of stars crossing, and strange fires in the air.

Have these no tongues to chide with?

Third Citizen. Why, at first

A man that was no seer might see what end

Should come on us that saw the mass come in.

And held our hand when man by man fell off,

And heart by heart was cooled of all its heat

By sprinkled holy-water of the court

In five days' space, tempering the fervent edge That had been fieriest on God's side:

Lord James, Whose heart should weep now for it,

or burn again
With shame to think how he made

strong their hands

Who have cast him out among the banished lords

That lack their life in England, kept

The chapel-door, that none who loved God's law

Might slay the idolatrous and whorish priest

In his mid sin; and after mass was said Lord Robert and Lord John of Coldingham,

Who then had put not off our cause, but sat

With faithful men as fellows at God's board,

Conveyed him to his chamber: there began

The curse that yet constrains us, and must fall

On more than these; of whom ye know this John

Is now before the face o' the fire of God,

And ere he died in desperate penitence, Men say, sent warning to his sister queen

To turn her feet from those unquiet ways

Wherein they tread behind the Pope's to hell.

First Citizen. His life was like his brother's of St. Cross,

As foul as need or friar's or abbot's be That had no shameful part in a king's race, And made such end as he that lives may

Whose bastard blood is proud yet, and insults

As might a prince's or a priest's indeed, Being truly neither, yet with either name Signed as in scorn; these are our lords, whose lust

Breaks down men's doors to fetch their daughters forth,

Even as his townsmen vexed the doors
of Lot

Till God sent on them fire, who spares but these

For our shame's sake, because we spare, being men,

And let our hands hang swordless, and the wrath

Faint in our hearts, that though God send none down Should be made fire to make a fire of

them.

Third Citizen. These fools and foul

that with them draw the king
To shame and riotous insolence which

turns
Past hope and love to loathing, — these,

though vile, Have in them less of poison than men's

tongues
Who for the queen's love boast in what
brief while

They will pluck down God, and plant Antichrist.

And pull out Knox by the ears: thus Bothwell did,

And yet stands higher than any head save his

Who in disdain of danger fills his hands As full of gold as are his faithless lips Of lies and bloody counsels, and requires

No less than part in all their forfeit lands

That live in exile, so to turn his name From loon to lord, from stranger into Scot,

And next the Pope's exalt it: while

Sets all his heart to fleshly foolishness, The beastlike body that eats up the soul

As a bird snared and eaten; and in fear

Of God and Rimmon, with a supple soul,

Crooks his lithe knee for craft, and bows his back

In either's house, yet seeks no prophet's leave,

Nor hears his saying that God shall spew the like

Out of his mouth.

Second Citizen. Yet this good grows in

That he has fallen in anger with the queen

For her knave's sake that was his closest friend.

Chief craftsman and main builder of the match;

Yea, half his heart, brother and bedfellow,

Sworn secret on his side.

Third Citizen. There are who think They have changed beds in very and shameful deed.

And halved more than their own hearts. First Citizen. He came here

On the Pope's party, against our kingly lords.

Against the duke, our first more natural head,

Against the good-will of all godliness; And hath he now cast their cords from him? nay,

This is the stormy sickness of ill blood Swelling the veins of sin in violent youth

That makes them wrangle, but at home and heart.

Whatever strife there seem of hands abroad,

They are single-minded in the hate of

Did he not break forth into bitterness, Being warned by Knox of youth and empty heart,

Yea, rail aloud as one made mad with wine?

Did he not lay devices with this knave That now ye say defiles him in his

To rid the noble Murray from their

That they might ride with hotter spurs for hell?

Second Citizen. God hath set strife betwixt them, that their feet

Should not be long time out of their own snares.

Here be the men we look for comfort

Men that have God's mark sharp upon the soul:

Stout Ochiltree, and our main stay John Knox.

Enter JOHN KNOX and OCHILTREE. Ochiltree. Have you yet hope that for his people's sake

God will leave off to harden her hard heart,

That you will yet plead with her? John Knox. Nay, I know not;

But what I may by word or witness

That will I do, being bidden: yet indeed I think not to bring down her height of

By counsel or admonishment. soul

Is as a flame of fire, insatiable,

And subtle as thin water; with her

Is passion mingled so inseparably That each gets strength from other, her

swift wit By passion being enkindled and made

And by her wit her keen and passionate heart

So tempered that it burn itself not out, Consuming to no end. Never, I think, Hath God brought up against the people of God,

To try their force or feebleness of faith, A foe than this more dangerous, nor of

More resolute against him.

Ochiltree. So long since You prophesied of her when new come

What then avails it that you counsel her

To be not this born danger that she is, But friends with God she hates, and with his folk

She would root out and ruin?

John Knox. Yet this time

I am not bidden of him to cast her off

I will speak once; for here even in our eyes

His enemies grow great, and cast off shame.

We are haled up out of hell to heaven, and now

They would fain pluck us backward by the skirt.

And these men call me bitter-tongued and hard,

Who am not bitter; but their work and they

Who gather garlands from the red pitside

To make foul fragrance in adulterous hair,

And lift white hands to hide the fires of God, —

Their sweetness and their whiteness shall he turn

Bitter and black. I have no hate of her,

That I should spare; I will not spare to strive

That the strong God may spare her, and not man.

Ochiltree. Yea, both, so be we have our lost lords home,

And the Pope's back-bowed changeling clean cast out

And of a knave made carrion. John Knox. For your first,

In grows as fruit out of your second wish:

Come but the day that looks in his dead face,

And these that hate him as he hates all good

Shall have their friends home, and their honor high

Which the continuance of his life keeps low.

Ochiltree. Surely, for that, my hand or any's else

Were hot enough to help him to his end. Yet when this thing is through, and this plague purged,

There stands a thorn yet in our way to prick, —

The loose, weak-witted, half-souled boy called king.

John Knox. It is of him I am bidden speak with her,

Having but now rebuked him back sliding

In God's sight and his name. It may be yet,

Whether by foolishness and envious heart,

Or by some nobler touch left in his blood, —

Some pulse of spirit that beats to a tune more high

Than base men set their hearts by, he will turn

Helpful to Godward, serviceable in soul To good men's ends in hate of that they hate.

I cannot say: howbeit, I fear not much Her love of him will keep.him fast to her:

If he be drawn in bonds after her wheels.

It will be but of subtle soul and craft The cords are woven that hold him. But, for me,

Love they or hate, my way is clear with them:

Not for her sake nor his sake shall our Lord

Change counsel and turn backward; and save his

What will or wit I have to speak or live,

He knows who made it little for myself, But for him great; and be you well assured,

Love of their love nor doubt of their dislike

Hath upon me more power than upon God.

For now I have seen him strive these

divers years
With spirits of men and minds exorbi-

tant, Souls made as iron and their face as

flame Full hard and hot against him, and

their wits

Most serpent-strong and swift, sudden

of thought

And overflowing of counsel, and their hands •

Full of their fortune, and their hearts made large

To hold increase of all prosperities;

And all these are not, and I poor man am,

Because he hath taken and set me on his side.

And not where these were; I am content alone

To keep mine own heart in his secret sight

Naked and clean, well knowing that no man born

Shall do me scathe but he hath bidden him do.

Nor I speak word but as he hath set it me.

First Citizen. Goes he to Holyrood? Second Citizen. Ay, sir, by noon.

First Citizen, There is a kindling trouble in the air;

The sun is halting toward the top of day;

It will be shine or rain before he come.

Ochiltree. What ails this folk to hover at our heel,

And hang their eyes on you so heed-fully?

John Knox. They should be naturally disquieted,

Seeing what new wind makes white the wave o' the time

We ride on out of harbor. — Sirs, ye have heard

News of your scathe and of shame done to God,

And the displeasure bites you by the heart,

I doubt not, if your hearts be godly given:

Make your souls strong in patience; let your wrath

Be rather as iron than as fuel in fire, Tempered and not consumed; heat that burns out,

Leaves the hearth chillier for the flameless ash

Than ere the wood was kindled. First Citizen. Master Knox,

You know us, whereto we would, and by what way:

This too much patience burns our checks with shame

That our hands are not redder than our face

With slaying of manslayers who spill blood of faith,

And pierce the heart of naked holiness. It is far gone in rumor, how the queen Will set on high and feed on gold that

Who was a scourge laid long since on the saints,—

The archbishop of St. Andrew's; and perforce,

Dyed as he stands in grain with inno cent blood,

Will make him mightier for our scathe and shame

Than ere the kindly people of the word Has made him bare of bad authority.

Second Citizen. Likewise she hath

given her seal imperial

To a lewd man and a stranger, her own knave,

Vile, and a papist; that with harp and song

Makes her way smoother toward the pit of hell.

John Knox. What needs us count and cast offences up
That all we know of, how all these

have one head, — The hateful head of unstanched mis-

belief?
For sins are sin-begotten, and their seed

Bred of itself and singly procreative; Nor is God served with setting this to

this
For evil evidence of several shame,

That one may say, Lo now! so many are they;

But if one, seeing with God-illumined eyes

In his full face the encountering face of sin,

Smite once the one high-fronted head,

and slay,
His will we call good service. For

myself,

If ye will make a counsellor of me,

I bid you set your hearts against one thing

To burn it up, and keep your hearts on fire,

Not seeking here a sign and there a a sign,

Nor curious of all casual sufferances,

But steadfast to the undoing of that thing done

Whereof ye know the being, however

it be,

And all the doing abominable of God. Who questions with a snake if the snake sting?

Who reasons of the lightning if it burn? While these things are, deadly will

these things be;

And so the curse that comes of cursed faith.

First Citizen. It is well said.

Second Citizen. Ay, and well done were well.

Third Citizen. We have borne too long for God, we that are men,

Who hath time to bear with evil if he would.

Having for life's length even eternity; But we that have but half our life to live, Whose half of days is swallowed of

their nights, -

We take on us this lame long-suffering, To sit more still and patienter than

As though we had space to doubt in, and long time

For temperate, quiet, and questionable pause.

First Citizen. Let the time come -Second Citizen. Nay, we must make the time,

Bid the day bring forth to us the fruit we would,

Or else fare fruitless forth.

Third Citizen. It is nigh noon;

There will be shine and rain and shine ere night.

## SCENE III. - HOLYROOD.

The QUEEN and RIZZIO; MARY SEY-TON and MARY CARMICHAEL in attendance.

Queen. Is he so tender-tongued? it is

That plucks the fang out from his hate, and makes

A stingless snake of his malignant

He hath a mind — or, had he a mind at all.

Would have a mind - to mischief; but his will

Is a dumb devil.

Rizzio. Why, fear then and no love Will make faith in him out of falsehood's self.

And keep him constant through un-

stableness.

Queen. Fear that makes faith may break faith; and a fool

Is but in folly stable. I cannot tell

If he indeed fear these men more than

Or if he slip their collar, whether or no He will be firm on my side, as you

Through very lightness; but I think not of him,

Steadfast or slippery. Would I had been that day

Handless, when I made one his hand with mine!

Yet it seemed best. I am spirit-sick and faint

With shame of his foul follies and loathed life,

Which hath no part but lewdness of a man, Nor style of soul nor several quality,

Dividing men from men, and man from beast, By working heart or complement of

brain, — None, very none. I will not see him

to-night. I have given command to insure our

privacy.

Is it past noon?

Enter DARNLEY and MAKY BEATON. Darnley. You say she hath asked for me?

Mary Beaton. Ay, and complainingly, as though her love

Were struck at by your absence.

Darnley. Love! her love!

It were a cunning stroke should print a wound

In that which hath no substance, and no spirit

To feel the hurt. Well, I will speak to

Queen. How like a chidden bondman of his lord

Looks my lord now! Come you from penance, sir? Has the kirk put you to no private shame

Besides the public tongue of broad rebuke ! We are blessed in your penitence; it is

A gracious promise for you.

Darnley. Penitence?

Queen. You have a tender faith and quick remorse

That will bear buffets easily; pray God It pluck you absolution from their hands

Who are godly sparing of it. We have heard

A priest of theirs cast for incontinence Hardly with thrice purgation of his shame

Redeemed himself to kirkward.

Darnley. I hear naught.

Queen. Nay, but you hear when these rebuke you of sin

In the full face and popular ear of men; You hear them surely, and patiently you hear,

And it shows in you godliness and

Praiseworthy from them; for myself, my lord,

I have some foolish petulances in me And stings of pride that shut me out from grace

So sought and bought of such men; but your course

May teach me timelier humble-minded-

And patience to get favor: which till

I have never needed beg, and now should prove

A very witless beggar. Teach me words,

Pray you, to move men's minds with; such great men's

As your submission purchases to be Good friends and patrons to you; for I

Your Knox is not my friend yet. Darnley. So I think.

Madam, I know not what you make of

Nor if your jest be seasonable or no;

I am no fool nor implement of theirs, Nor patienter of their irreverences

Than the queen's self; if you endure such tongues,

Why, I may bear them. Queen. Well and patiently;

I praise your manhood's temper for it and am

The happier for your royalty of spirit That will not feel wrong done of baser

To be at all wrong done you. Darnley. Will you think it?

Well then, I am so, I am just your thought:

You read me right, and this our friend reads too,

For I am plain and easy to read right. Queen. Have you made time to say

Darnley. Ay, and this,

That it mislikes me - it gives me discontent

That men should —

Queen. Ay? that men should - any thing — Bear themselves manlike, or that men

should be, -It is offence done openly to you?

Darnley. Nay, not offence, nor open; naught it is,

Or to me naught.

Queen. Naught as I think, indeed. You were about to chide us? well it is You have so humble a wife of us and

To make your chidings fruitful, that your words

Bear and bring forth good seed of bettering change.

I pray you, when you chide me, that you make

Your stripes the gentler for my humble.

Darnley. I have no mind to jest and jape, and will —

And will not wrangle with you. Queen. Will, and will not?

They say a woman's will is made like

But your will yet is wilfuller than ours Darnley. Not as I think.

Queen. God better the king's thought

And mind more tyrannous than is his place!

Darnley. If I be king -

Queen. And I be kingdomless,

And place be no place, and distinction die

Between the crown and curch — Well, on, our lord.

Darnley. Why am I out of counsel with you? Whence

Am I made show of for a titular fool, And have no hand in enterprise of yours,

Nor tongue, nor presence? Not alone my name

That is rubbed out and grated off your gold.

But myself plucked out of your register, Made light account of, held as nothingness,

Might move me - Oueen. Whither?

Darnley. To some show of wrath More than complaint, if I were minded

ill.

Here is a breach made with the English queen,

Our cousin of England, a wide-open breach,

A great-grown quarrel, and I no part of it,

Not named or known of.

Queen. You are the happier man Heavenward, if blessed be the peace-

Darnley. The happier heavenward, being the worldlier shamed;

The less I like it. You have suddenly cast forth

A man her servant and ambassador, With graceless haste and instance, from the realm,

On barren charge of bare complicity
With men now banished and in English
bounds,

But not attaint of treason toward us

Nor deadly doomed of justice.

Queen. Not attaint?

Give not your spirit trouble for that; the act

Is drawn by this against them, and the estates

Need but give warrant to their forfeiture,

Now it has passed the lords of the articles.

Take no care for it; though it be sweet in you,

And gracious, to show care of your worst foes

You have on earth; that would have driven you forth

A shameful rebel to your cousin queen, And naked of our foreign favor here That clothed you with unnatural royalty

And not your proper purple. Forth; you say

I have done this wrong?

Darnley. I do not say you have done Wise work nor unwise; but howbeit, I say

I had no part in aught of it, nor knew With what a spur's prick you provoked her spleen

Who is not stingless to requite it you, Nor with what scant of reason.

Queen. 'Tis sad truth,

She shows no less disquiet mind than yours,

Nor a less loud displeasure: she was kind,

She says, well-willed to me-ward, but my sins,

Unkindliness, and soul's obduracy, Have made her soft heart hard; and for this fault

She will not ever counsel me again, Nor cease to comfort my dear brother's need

With gold and good compassion; and I have

Even such a sister as brother of her as him,

And love alike and am like loved of them.

He wills me well, she swears, as she herself,

And, I'll re-swear it, she wills as well as he.

Darnley. Ay, we know whence this wellspring of your will

Takes head and current; who must

We know, fair field, broad booty to sweep up,

Space to win spurs in; and what English gold

Must after battle gild his heels with them,

When he shall stand up in my father's stead,

Lieutenant-general for you of the realm; And who must have your brother's lands we know,

Investiture must have, and chancellorship,

And masterdom in council. Here he stands,

A worthy witness to it: do you look on me?

Is it not you must be the golden sir,
The counsel-keeper, the sole tongue of
the head,

The general man, the goodly? Did

you send

Lord Bothwell hard at heel of him cast forth

To make his wrong sweet with sweetspoken words,

And temper the sharp taste of outrage done

And heat in him of anger, with false breath?

Why made you not your own tongue tunable

Who are native to soft speaking, and who hate

With as good heart as any Scot that hates

England? or is her messenger your fool
To take blows from you and good words
alike

As it shall chance him cross your morning mood

Angry or kindly?

Queen. Sir, our chancellor, We charge you that you answer not the duke.

Darnley. Duke?

Queen. Ay, the duke of Rothsay; whom we pray

Seek otherwhere some scemlier talkingstock

To flush his hot and feverish wit upon.

Darnley. Your chancellor? why went not such a man

With you before the lords of the ar-

Now, an hour back, and yet but half day through,

To help you speak the banished lords to death?

Is't not the heart of the office, to see law

Punish law's traitors, as you bid them be

In the proof's teeth, who are honester than some

You bid be law's justiciaries of them?

Why went he not? 'twere no more shame nor praise

Than here to swell in state beside your own.

Queen. Must we crave leave to bid you twice take leave,

Or twice to ask what would you?

Darnley. Truly this,

A mere mean thing, an insignificance, If you will once more hear — oh, no-

wise me,
But just the man whose name you take

in mouth

To smite me on my face with — Master Knox.

Queen. Are you his usher going before his grace
No less than servant to his master-

word?

Or is it penitence and submission makes

you In the holy way of honor and recom-

pense So high in office with him? Say, this

time
For the usher's sake I'll speak with the

usher's lord:
Yet if I mind 'twas I bade send for

To speak of you his servant: for I hear You did not at first stripe submit yourself,

Nor take all penance with all patience, being

Brought hardly in time to harsh humility

Such as we see now; which thing craves excuse

To make you gracious in your master's eyes,

If it be true — I would not think it were —

You brake in anger forth from the High Kirk, Being there rebuked, and would not sit

at meat,

But past away to hawking in pure, rage After an hour or twain of high discourse

Heard with plain show of sharp unthankfulness:

Which that you now repent, and would redeem, I will bear witness for you to your

To make your penitential peace with

him. Let him come in.

Darnley. I am no messenger.

Queen. Where is my chamberlain? bid Marnock here -

Let the man in, and one man only more, Whoever it be; we'll see him privily. Our chancellor, and our no messenger, We have no need of to dispute with him.

Darnley. If I go hence -

Queen. Why, then you stay not here. Darnley. But if I go at bidding -Queen. Why, you go:

With the more speed, the less of tarriance made.

Let me not hold you half-way back: farewell.

Exeunt DARNLEY and RIZZIO. I have not begun so luckily, nor set So good a face on the first half of day, Now to keep terms with mere tonguetraitors more.

Enter JOHN KNOX and JOHN ERSKINE OF DUN.

So once we are met again, sir, you and I. Set him before us.

John Knox. I am before your grace Without man's haling or compulsive

Nor at these divers times you have sent

Have you found need to use me forcefully.

Queen. Well, let that be; as verily meseems

'Tis I find forceful usage at your hands, And handling such as never prince has borne

Since first kings were; yet have I borne with it,

Who am your natural princess, and sat bv

To hear your rigorous manner of speaking through

As loud against my kinsfolk as myself; Yea, I have sought your favor diligently,

And friendship of my natural subject born,

And reconcilement by all possible means: I have offered you at your own choice

and time Whenso it pleased you ever admonish

Presence and audience; yea, have

shamed myself With reasonless submission; have en-

dured The naked edge of your sharp speech,

and yet Cannot be quit of you: but here to.

God I make my vow I will be once revenged. Give me my handkerchief. I should take shame

That he can shame me with these tears, to make

Mine eyes his vassals.

John Knox. Madam, true it is

There have been divers seasons of dis-Between your grace and me, wherein I

have never Found you offended: neither now

would find

The offence I sought not; yea, I knew this well,

If it shall please God break your prison-house, And lighten on your disimprisoned

soul, That my tongue's freedom shall offend

you not.

For surely being outside the preachingplace

I think myself no breeder of offence, Nor one that gives man cause of wrath and wrong;

And being therein, I speak not of my self

But as God bids who bids me, speaking plain,

Flatter no flesh on earth. Lo, here I stand,

A single soul and naked in his eye,

Constrained of him, to do what thing he will,

And dare and can none other. Hath

he sent me To speak soft words of acceptable

things
In ladies' chambers or kings' courts, to
make

Their ways seem gracious to them? I

wot, no.

I am to bring God's gospel in men's

ears, And faith therein, and penitence, which

The twain parts of it; but the chief o'
the land

And all the main of your nobility

Give God no heed, nor them that speak for God,

Through flattering fear and ill respect of you;

And seeing, if one preach penitence to men,

He must needs note the sin he bids repent, How should not I note these men's sin

who choose To serve affections in you, and wild

will,
Rather than truth in God? This were lost breath.

To chide the general wrong-doing of the world,

And not the very present sin that burns

Here in our eyes offensive, — bid serve God,

And say not with what service. Queen. Nay, but so

What is it to you, or any saving me, How this man married to me bears himself?

With what sign-manual has God warranted

Your inquisition of us? What am I,
That my most secret sanctuaries of life
And private passages of hours should
be

Food for men's eyes, or pavement for men's feet

To peer and pasture, track and tread upon,

Insult with instance? Am I only bound

To let the common mouth communicate

In my life's sweet or bitter sacrament, The wine poured, the bread broken every day?

To walk before men bare, that they may

judge
If I were born with any spot or no,

And praise my naked nature? to subject

Mine unsubmitted soul subordinate
To popular sight and sentence? What
am I.

That I should be alone debarred, deposed,

From the poor right of poor men, who may live

Some hour or twain unchallenged of the day,

And make to no man answer what they do
As I to mine must render? who is this

That takes in hand such hard things and such high?

Sir, what man are you, that I need account

For this word said, or that, or such things done,

Only to you or mainly, of myself? Yea, what are you within this commonwealth?

John Knox. A man within it, and a subject born,

Madam; and howsoever no great man, Earl, lord, nor baron to bear rule therein,

Yet has God made me a profitable man, How abject I seem ever in your eye, No member of the same unmeritable.

Yea, madam, this pertains not less to

Than any of all your noble-nurtured men,

To warn men of what things may hurt the same.

So as I see them dangerous; and here

in

My conscience and mine office with one tongue

Crave plainness of me: wherefore to

yourself I say the thing I speak in public place, That what great men soever at any

time Shall be consenting to your lord's unfaith

Or flattering furtherance of unfaith in

They do what in them lieth to cast out Christ.

Banish his truth, betray his liberty

And free right of this realm, and in the

Shall haply do small comfort to yourself.

And for him too, your husband, it may be

That as he spares not to dishonor God For your delight, by service of the mass,

God will not spare to smite him by your hand

That faithlessly he fawns on to his loss. Queen. When was there queen so handled in the world?

I would I could not weep; for being thus used

I needs must never or now. Is this light day?

Am I asleep, or mad, or in a trance, That have such words to beat about mine ears.

And in mine eyes his present face who speaks?

Erskine of Dun. Madam, I pray your grace contain your mood,

And keep your noble temperance of yourself,

For your high sake and honor, who are

For excellence of spirit and natural

As sovereign born as for your face and

Kingdom, and kingly beauty; to whose might

The worthiest of the world, all Europe's chief.

Her choice of crowns, might gladly bow themselves

To find your favor. I beseech you think That here is no disloyalty designed.

Nor thing dishonorable; for were men

Whose wits are whole, and false whose faiths are sound,

The very mouth of madness would speak sense,

The very tongue of treason would speak truth,

For love and service of your royalty; Blind curses bless, and red rebellion

bow. That came to burn and threaten. Do

not dream That a man faithful Godward and well

loved Can be to you-ward evil-willed, who

have Power on your natural and your born

unfriends To bind their good-will to you.

Queen. Words, all words; I am weary of words: I have heard words enough

To build and break, if breath could break or build,

Centuries of men. What would they with me, sir?

These my liege folk that love me to the death, -

Their death or mine, no matter, - my fast friends Whose comfortable balms so bruise

my head It cannot hold the crown up; these

good hands That wring my wrist round to wrench

out the staff God set into mine own; these loving,

That take my name upon them as to

And leave it rank with foam of hateful

speech?

Must I be dead deposed, or must I live Stript shameless, naked to the very name,

A crestless creature and displumed, that feeds

On charities and chances? will they give

Me, their queen born, me, bread or dust to eat,

With a mouth water-moistened or a dry,

Beggared or buried? shall I hold my

head In shameful fief and tenantry of these For their least wind of any wrath that

To storm it off my shoulders? What were I

That being so born should be born such a thing

As bondsmen might bemock the bondage of

And slaves contemn for slavery? Nay, no words:

A word may wound, and no word heal again,

As none can me — whom all men's words may wound —

Who am liable to all buffets of men's tongues,

All stripes of all their scandals — and was born

To no such fear — and have nor tongue nor wit

To plead and gather favor—no such grace

As may get grace, no piteous skilfulness—

Only my truth and tears; and would to God My tears and truth for you were wind

and fire
To burn and blow corruption from the

world,
And leave pure peace to breed where
you plant war,

And make the furrows fat with pestilence

And the grain swell with treason! but, too sure,

They too can hurt, and heal not. I am soul-sick

With shame and bitter weakness; yet, God's will,

I may take strength about me to put off

Some part of shame. Sir, you that make me weep,

By these my tears and my sharp shame of them

I swear you will not laugh to see me laugh,

When my time comes: you shall not; I will have

Time to my friend yet; I shall see you, sir,

If you can weep or no, that with dry eyes Have seen mine wet; I will try that: look to it.

John Knox. Madam, - I speak in very eye of God, -

I never took delight in any tears

Shed of God's creatures; yea, for my self-sake,

I can but very hardly abide the tears

Of mine own boys whom mine own hand and love

Chastens, and much less can take any joy
In this the weeping of your majesty.

But, seeing I have given you no offensive cause

Nor just occasion, but have spoken truth

After mine office as mine own place craves

Lest I, God's man, be man-sworn to God's truth,

I must sustain, howbeit unwillingly, Rather these tears drawn of your majesty

Than blood of mine own conscience stabbed to death

Or through my silence of my commonwealth

By my dumb treason wounded.

Queen. A fair word:

I thought it was forgotten of men's mouths,

And only lived in the inner heat of the heart,

Too sure to want the spelling of their speech.

Sir, you shall find it in my very tears,— This blood you fear for of your commonwealth,

And in the hurts of mine authority

The wounds it lies abed with; what, God help,

Can the head bleed, and not the body faint?

Or wherein should the kingdom feel

As in the kingship stricken? there are you,

If you be true man, and each true man

Subject, and circled with the bound of rule,

Hurt to the heart. But heartless things are words:

Henceforth I will not mix my speech with yours

In the way of disputation ever more, Nor set against your tongue the plea of mine

To reason as its equal. Wait you here, Here in the chamber: you, sir, come with me

To counsel in my cabinet somewhile; We will return his answer.

[Exeunt QUEEN and ERSKINE OF DUN.

Mary Carmichael. She wept sore;

I never saw her spirit, so chafed, so

melt

And thaw to such mere passion; this one time

He is sure attainted.

Mary Beaton. Ay, she fain would dare

Upon the spur of the hour attaint him;

What none dare else, she durst not: they will put

Force of fair words as bridle in the mouth

Of her wild will and reinless. Mary Seyton. She is wise,

And fights not wisdom, but being counselled well

Takes truce with time and tongueless policy.
What! will the man speak to us? he

looks so hard
With such fast eyes and sad: I had

not thought

His face so great, nor presence. John Knox. Ah! fair ladies,

How fair were this your life and pleasurable

If this might ever abide, and so in the end

With all this gay gear we might pass to heaven!

But fie upon that knave, Death, that will come,

Whether we will or will not: and being come,

When he has laid on his assured arrest, The foul worms will be busy with this flesh,

Be it never so fair and tender; and the soul,

The silly soul shall be so feeble, I fear, It can bear with it neither gold nor pearl,

Painting of face, garnish, nor precious stones.

Mary Beaton. Sir, for myself, small joy this were to me,

That this life should live ever; nor would I

Care much by praying to stretch my days of life Into more length, nor much to take

with me
Garnish or gold: but one thing I would

fain
Have to go grave-wards with me, and

keep it safe,
That you have cast no word or warning

on,
And yet women, whose hearts are

worldly worn And by no creed of yours consolable,

Nor gladness of your gospel, love its name

As dear as God's; and its name is but rest.

Yohn Knox. Rest has no other name

but only God's.

Mary Beaton. But God has many another name than rest:

His name is life, and life's is weariness.

John Knox. Ay, but not his: that
life has lost his name;

Peace is his name, and justice.

Mary Beaton. Ah, sir! see.

Can these two names be one name on earth

Can two keep house together that have

Justice and peace? where is that man
i' the world

Who have found peace in the arms of justice lain,

Or justice at the breast of peace asleep? Is not God's justice painted like as ours,

A strong man armed, a swordsman red as fire,

Whose hands are hard, and his feet washed in blood?

washed in blood?

It were an iron peace should sleep with

And rest were unrest that should kiss his lips.

What man would look on justice here, and live.

Peace has no more part in him.

John Knox. Lady, nay,
That only peace indeed which is of God
Hath in the just man not a part, but
all.

But the whole righteous life and heart in him

Still peacefully possesses; who hath not

Or loves not justice, he can love not peace,

For peace is just; and that thing is not peace

That such men love, but full of strife and lies.

A thing of thorns and treasons. This were even

As if a man loving a harlot should Praise her for maiden and himself for pure

To love such maidenhood, when any says

That he loves peace who loves not holiness;

For peace is holy. Yea, and if one seek

He shall find peace where bitterest justice is,

In the full fire and middle might of wrath,

Rather than where sloth sucks the lips of shame .

Or fear with her foul brother unbelief Lives in adultery; strife is that which springs,

As a winged worm and poisonous, of their sheets:

And in the slumberless and stormstrewn bed

That very war's self spreads for righteousness

Peace as a babe is born.

. Mary Beaton. Would God it were!

For 'tis a bitter childbed: these long years

We look for fruit, and none comes forth
of it,

But yet more iron travail; and ourselves,

Desiring justice, quite lose hold of peace,

And are distracted with our own fierce want

And hungry need of right unreachable. Yet it may come, and then shall peace indeed.

John Knox. You talk against your habit.

Re-enter ERSKINE OF DUN. Erskine of Dun. Master Knox,

The queen will no more hear you at this time,

But with good-will and gracious mind will weigh

Your worth and worthy meaning in your words.

John Knox. It may be she will never hear me more.

Farewell, fair ladies; may God look on you,

And give you chiefly comfort, which is grace.

[Exeunt John Knox and Erskine of Dun.

Mary Seyton. Why did you prate so

preacher-like with him?

Mary Beaton. I cannot tell by asking

of myself, Nor answer for your asking. Which

of you
Shall wait at supper on the queen tonight?

Mary Carmichael. None but her counsel of close hours, Argyle.

Mary Beaton. She sups with them; and in attendance there

Some two or three I heard of, -- one of these

No man of arms.

Mary Seyton. What should they do with arms?

More need of lips to sing with.

Mary Beaton. Ay, to sing:

It is no matter of state they meet upon!

Mary Seyton. Are your wits lost in deed, or do you jest?

Mary Beaton. True, it should be for no affairs of state

They sup at nightfall in the lesser How at close midnight, your wife's room, -

They three, and three to make the music up.

Mary Seyton. What ails you at it? Mary Beaton. Nothing; I ail naught. I did but think what music he should make

After this preacher.' Let us to the queen.

#### Scene IV. - Darnley's Lodging.

DARNLEY and SIR GEORGE DOUGLAS. Darnley. I think our friend of Morton had grown slack

But for my spurring, uncle.

Sir George Douglas. Nay, he is firm: You do him less right than you do yourself

To think he should need quickening. Darnley. Oh, I know not:

What should I know? what wit have I to know?

I am a fool, and have no forethought!

But for my resolute instance at this need. -

I said to him, Be resolute, — and since then,

Some six or eight hours gone, I have heard such things

As would put sense and passion in dead bones, -

By God I have; it shall be seen I have. But are you sure it should be done tonight?

Sir George Douglas. Ay, surely. Darnley. Well. I see no surety in it. Methinks now, every day we let him

live Blows hot the popular wrath of all the

And makes us surer, when we strike indeed,

That all men's hearts will stab him with our hands.

Sir George Douglas. By which account he might live long, and die An old white death and woundless. not this

The man whereof you told me some while since

doors being locked,

You burst them open, and gat hold of

Hid in a closet of her bedchamber,

Save for furred gown and shirt about the knave

Naked? and must you take him so

And he so twice get clear of you, and laugh?

You swore me that: what need to tell or swear, If he must live still? weeping, with

clenched hands, You swore it, praying me for our

shame's sake send Word to your uncle Ruthven; but

what need, If there were no shame in the thing at

Or but so little, as now so little it

seems.

There is no haste to slay him? Darnley. Nay, you carp:

'Tis thus men ever catch at my good words, To turn them on their tongues, and spit

them out Changed and discolored. He shall

die to-night. Sir George Douglas. Assuredly.

Darnley. I say so, - mark, I say it, I that have cause: how else could it be

But sure it is, — I say he shall not live. Let us go seek Lord Morton out again, And tell him it is sworn we strike tonight.

How many of us have hands in it with

Who cannot with mine own hand as I would

Strike - it were shameful to me were it not?

For mine own hand's sake.

Sir George Douglas, There are Lands enough

Without the shame done to your high ness' hand:

Sufficeth us we have it set to the bond

That signs him dead; nor need we sum their names

Whose hands will strike, not spare, for their own sakes.

Darnley. Well, let us go to make my lord's faith sure

That it shall be no later than to-night.

Scene V. - THE QUEEN'S CABINET.

The Queen, Rizzio, Countess of Argyle, Lord Robert Stuart, Arthur Erskine, in attendance.

Queen. Have I not done a queenlike work to-day?

I have made attaint my traitors of myself:

With no man at my hand to strengthen me.

Have gone before the lords of the

And set my will upon them like a seal, And they for their part set on their old friends

The bloody seal of treason signed of death

And countersigned of burning ignominy.

You are half fearful, you, lord chancel-

You my good servant; but I knew their necks

Were made to take the impression of my foot,

Their wills and souls the likeness of mine own,

And I have used them for the things they are.

Countess of Argyle. You have been right royal, madam, and your lovers

Have joyful cause to praise you.

Queen. Will you say it,

Who bear as much part in his blood as I

Of our dead father's giving? then I think

No other tongue for love of Murray slain Shall sting me though mine own speak

off his head,
Once caught up out of England; nay,
I think

We shall get vantage of your lord's friend Knox

Ere many days be.

Countess of Argyle. Speed your majesty!

The cord were hallowed that should silence him.

Queen. Ay, though mine own hands twist it. To spin hemp

For such a throat, so loud and eloquent, Should better please me, and seem a queenlier thing,

Than to weave silk, and flower it with

fine gold.

He hath a tongue to tame a tiger with,
Fright into fierce and violent reverence
The fearfullest earth's monsters. I do
think

I like him better than his creed-fellows Whose lips are softer toward me; 'tis some sport

To set my wit to his, and match with

The shrewd and fiery temper of his spirit

For trial of true mastery: yet to-day. He made me weep, weep mightily — by faith,

If there be faith in any lips of earth, I think to live, and laugh at his tears yet.

Robert Stuart. I would the hand were on him that might make

His eyes weep red, and drop out of their rings,

Looking on death. What reason gives him leave,
What right makes room for him to take

his way
So past men's patience grown so mas-

terful?
Had I one half word's warrant of your

grace, His tongue should not be long inside

his lips.

Queen. I am no wife of Antony, to

My needle's point against his tongue's edge; yet

I have cause as good as Fulvia's though

I have cause as good as Fulvia's, though his speech

Ring somewhat short of Roman. Here is one

That has that southern honey on his lips Frozen as it seems up with this galling air,

And not a note left golden, but his tongue

Nipt with the chill to death as with a

That cuts us short of music.

Countess of Argyle. Yea, my lord, Why will you so discomfort the good hour

With tongueless sadness? We have cause to chide,

That, having cause to sing, find song to seek

And thought to find it ready.

Rizzio. I have been sad
These two hours back; I know not
what it was

So struck me out of mirth, for I was merry,

And knew not why.

Queen. Nay, if you love me, sir, You had reason to be merry with my mirth

Who am blithe to be found queen over my foes.

I have been glad all this good day thereof

Save some few minutes that my subjectsaint

Vexed even to mere intemperance; but few tears

Wept out that little bitter part of day, And left it sweet. Have you not heard men say

This heaviness without a root of fear Goes oft before some good? now should there be

Some new thing hard upon us that will make

All good hearts glad. Have you no song to mock

The doubt away that mocks you? Rizzio. At your will.

I am something yet in tune for such a song

As joy makes out of sorrow, when the thought

Plays with false grief for joy's sake.
Please you hear it

With such light audience as its worth is light?

Queen. Ay, such a note should fit me for this time;

After the tuneless toil of talking day, A light song lightly brings ill thoughts asleep.

# Rizzio (sings).

Lord Love went Maying Where Time was playing, In light hands weighing Light hearts with sad; Crowned king with peasant, Pale past with present, Harsh hours with pleasant, Good hopes with bad; Nor dreamed how fleeter Than Time's swift metre, O'er all things sweeter How clothed with power, The murderess maiden Mistrust walks laden With red fruit ruined and dead white flower.

Horv close behind him Ere man's faith find him, How strong to bind him With fears for bands, Lest once beholden Of man the golden God's face embolden All hearts and hands; For if doubt were not, Whose sore shafts spare not. Large life would care not For death's poor hour, Seeing all life's season By love's sweet reason Made wise would seem in his eyes a flower.

Countess of Argyle. Did you hear that?

Robert Stuart. What?

Queen. Nothing but sweet words. Countess of Argyle. I heard a cry i'

the wind as of one hurt.

Arthur Erskine. There is no wind up, madam.

Queen. Peace, I pray;

It was your own sense mocked you Hear it through;

There should be more, and sadder.

# Countess of Argyle. Nay, I heard.

## RIZZIO (sings).

By Love's side flying As Time went crying Glad news and lying In all men's ears, With blind feet gliding She came deriding Their joyous tiding That ends in tears; From Time's side failing As Love sank quailing, Her strong wings sailing Made all heads cower, Her wings untethered, With fleet thoughts feathered, Made weak the summer and bleak the flower.

Hope found no cover Wherein to hover. And Love no lover, And Joy no place; Till when Time creeping Had left him sleeping, Love knelt down weeping Before her face, And prayed, soul-stricken, One flower might quicken, Though spring should sicken And storm devour; She from her bosom Flung one sere blossom, Then passed him dead on the last dead flower.

Robert Stuart. Hark! some one laughed there.

Queen. What does death i' the song? Can they not let love live, but must needs make

His grave with singing? 'Tis the trick of song

That finds no way to end else. Rizzio. An old trick;

Your merrier songs are mournfuller sometimes

Than very tears are.

Queen. Do you hear noises still?

Enter DARNLEY.

Who sent you to us?

Darnley. My love to my sweet lady. [Kisses her.

Queen. What feet are theirs behind you? Who stands there?

Darnley. Nay, nothing, nay, sweet,

nothing.

Queen. I should know — Judas! [Seeing RUTHVEN in the door

Darnley. I tell you -

Ruthven. Let that man come forth;

He hath been here too long. Queen. What hath he done?

Ruthven. So please your highness, how he hath done you wrong

To offend the honor of your majesty, I dare not boldly say; but this I dare,

He hath done the king your husband's honor wrong

In this past all the rest, to hinder him Of the crown matrimonial, which your grace

Made his by promise. Other wrongs

than this
Are more than I need speak of: for

the lords,
He hath caused you banish a great part
of them,

And the most chief, and at this parlia-

Forefault them as for treason, that him-

Who jets here in his cap and damask gown

Might of your grace be made a lord, and tread

On men more noble: wherefore with good cause

For very love I pray your majesty

Make not yourself his buckler who lacks heart

Save to pluck forth his hanger, and not strike,

But cower behind, and clasp your gown for shield.

for shield.

Stand from before the window, lest perforce

I hale him hence by the hair.

Queen. Help us, our friends!

Thrust out this death-faced traitor.

Arthur Erskine. Sir, give way.

Robert Stuart. Out of this presence

Draws.

Ruthven. Lay no hands on me;

Stand; I will not be handled.

Enter FAULDONSIDE and SIR

George Douglas.

Queen. Out with him!

Rizzio. Save, save me, madam! Queen. You are within my ward.

Stand from him, sirs; what! treason! Fauldonside. Nay, then, thus.

[Putting a pistol to her breast. Queen. Do him no wrong; ye dare

not murder me:
If he have sinned, let justice pass on him.
Fauldonside. This cord shall justify

him.

Rizzio. Help me! help!

Sir George Douglas. Let go the queen. Rizzio. Help me, my mistress!

Fauldonside. Out! Queen. Have mercy!

Rizzio. Mercy! nay, I am innocent!

Save me, sweet lady!

Queen. Will ye slay me too?

Fauldonside. Drag him away; pluck his hands off her.

Rizzio. Help!

Queen. Why does that sheath sit empty on your side?

Where is the dagger?

Darnley. Why, I know not where.

Queen. It will be known hereafter; it shall be

Dear blood to some of you if David's here

Be spilt, my faithful servant's; but may God,

My poor true friend, have mercy on your soul!

Ruthven. Here, take your wife into your arms, my lord,

And bid her fear not. — Madam, have no fear;

We had sooner spend the blood of our own hearts

Than you should suffer harm; and what we do

Is but your husband's bidding. Le them pass:

He shall be kept for this time safe enough

In my lord's chamber here.

Darnley. Ay shall he, safe -

In that same chamber where you used of old,

Before this fellow grew so in your grace, To come and seek me; but since he so fell

In credit with you and familiar use, Even if I come to yours I find of late Small entertainment of you, save so

As David may sit third with us, and

To cards with you even till an hour or

Be gone past midnight.

Queen. I have heard not said

It was a duteous gentlewoman's part
To seek her husband's chamber, but the
man's

To seek the wife when he would aught with her.

Darnley. Why came you to my chamber, then, at first,

And ever till these few months back that he

Became familiar with you? or am I In any part now of my body failed,

To fall out of your grace? or what disdain

Have you of me? or what offence of mine Makes you not use me at all times

alike, Seeing I am willing to do all good

things That may become a husband to his

wife?

Oueen. My lord, of all the shame

here done to me, You have the fault: for which sake I

henceforth Shall never be your wife, nor lie with

you, Nor ever shall have liking of my life

Till I may make you bear as sore a

As I bear now.

Ruthven. Madam, for honor's sake, Be reasonably and timely reconciled

To your wed lord; and with him take advice

Of such good friends as love you. Give

I am faint, and cannot stand to plead with you. Bring me to drink, for God's sake.

Darnley. Give my lord

A cup of wine.

Queen. Is this your malady?

If ye shall slay me or my six-months'

By this night's force and fear, my friends yet live

To wreak me of Lord Ruthven.

Ruthven. Be content.

Queen. When word goes forth how I am handled here -

What, am I kinless, think you, without help?

Mine uncles, and my brother king of France,

All lords of all lands living, all heads crowned,

Shall be one storm to shake you from the world:

And the Pope with me, and the Catholic king,

And all that live or of my faith or blood,

Shall all make way upon you. Ruthven. I am too mean

That these so many and mighty should take aim

At one such poor man here as I am. See,

If you will weigh it worthily yourself, This is no treason; never till this night Was so good service done you. For myself,

I will make answer to God's charge and man's

How I have served you in it. Queen. What have I done?

What thing am I, that ye should use me thus? O miserable and desertless that I am,

Unkingdomed of mine honor! I that had

Lordship of land and natural rule of

Am poorer here than any landless man, And weaker than all women. you, sir,

By what law's sentence am I made man's thrall?

What lord have I offended that can bid

My face for shame be covered in your sight?

Whom have I wronged? or who hath power on me,

What thing soever I be, to do me wrong?

Who hath given forth judgment on me? what man's right

Calls me his servant? Nay, there is no

Men strike without a sentence; and ye strike

Your own right in me and your name to death

With one self-ruinous violence.

Ruthven. Be at peace;

We strike but your own sickness off yourself,

Who cut off him to save you: the disease

That dies of the physician leaves no

That you should curse, but thank him. Queen. Thank? ay, thank -

God give me grace to give you thanks! be sure

Ye shall not lack my memory to it, nor

To made me worthy of you. What! no more?

[Exit RUTHVEN. I thought his wrath was large enough for me

To find a murderous part in where to

And share it with my servant. Must I live?

Sir, you that make death warm between your lips,

And, silent, let fall murder from your mouth.

Have you no kiss to kill me? no love left

To give me poison? Why is he gone forth?

Hath the hot falsehood eaten through your tongue? Speak.

Darnley. Why, I bade him look to those your friends

That might have risen upon us; hear you that?

[Noise outside

There is a clamor of them in the courts,

But naught to help or hurt now. He is gone

To read our will out in the general ear, And by proclaiming of my share with them

In this their new-born justice to make

Men's hearts that hearken; and lest fear shake our friends,

Or ill-will toward us and good-will toward you

Make our foes strong in malice of design,

To warn them of your brother's present speed,

Who must be here with morning: my device,

My trick to win all faiths that hang on him

And tie them to my service with his hand.

So have we all souls instant on our side,

And you no way to wound us: for by this,

Even with the hearing of my name given forth

As parcel of the bond that writes him dead,

dead, Which is now cancelled with his blood-

shedding,
This your good town is with us, and
your lords

That stood for you with this man fled or dead,

If they dare strike or stand yet. What shift now?

What wit? what craft?

Queen. My friends driven forth the court?

No help upon my side? The town raised too?

parnley. We had no heart nor wit to work with, ha?

We were your fools, and heartless?

Queen (at the window). Help, all

friends!
All good men help your queen here!
Ho, inv lord,

My lord the Provost!

Darnley. He is raised indeed.

Queen. Help for the queen! help, Provost!

Darnley. Peace, I say;

You may fare worse: these are wild hours.

Voice without. Sit down;

You shall be hewn in pieces if you stir, And flung into the Nor'-Loch.

Darnley. Nay, be wise:

Pluck not their madness on you. Queen. Oh, your love!

It shows now kindly in you.

Re-enter RUTHVEN.

Ruthven. All is sped;

The lords of the adverse party being roused up

And hearing with what large applause

nd hearing with of men

The reading of our sentence in the bond

And names subscribed, and proclamation made

Of Murray even at heel of the act returned,

Was of all mouths made welcome, in fierce haste

Forth of their lodging fled confusedly With no more tarriance than to bring their lives

Clear of the press and cry of peril at hand,

And their folk round them in a beaten

rank Hurled all together; so no man being

left,—
The earls of Huntley and of Bothwell
gone,—

To lift a hand against the general peace.

The townsmen; of their surety satisfied.

Brake up with acclamation of content For the good comfort done them in this deed.

Queen. What have ye made my servant?

Ruthven. A dead dog. His turn is done of service.

Darnley. Yea, stark dead?

Ruthven. They stabbed him through and through with edge on edge

Till all their points met in him; there be lies.

Cast forth in the outer lodge, a piteous knave

And poor enough to look on. Oueen. I am content.

Now must I study how to be revenged. Darnley. Nay, think not that way: make it not so much;

Be warned and wiser.

Queen. Must I not, my lord?

You have taught me worthier wisdom than of words; And I will lay it up against my heart.

### ACT II. — BOTHWELL.

Time, from March 10, 1566, to February 9, 1567.

Scene I. - The Queen's Chamber.

Enter DARNLEY and ARTHUR ERS-KINE, severally.

Darnley. Is the queen risen?

Arthur Erskine. She has not slept, my lord. They say she is in some peril of mis-

hap Through the sore handling of this vio-

lent night, -

Mortal mishap it may be. Darnley. Ay! who say it?

What should be mortal to her? she was not sick,

Nor near enough her danger. Arthur Erskine. I am no leech:

Haply the fright of murderous menaces And noise of swords is held medicinal; The savor of a slain friend comforta-

And his blood balm: if these be health-

ful things, You have given her weakness physic. Enter the QUEEN.

Queen. Ah, our lord!

Comes he with death about him? could take it

As readily as condemned men take reprieve,

For of a life much deadlier than itself Death would reprieve me.

Darnley. I am come to bring you

help.

Queen. You are ever helpful, even at all needs good,

For stroke or speech, good always. I am weak;

Let me have execution swift or soft;

Here is no strength to suffer.

Darnley. Sit, and rest.

Queen. Nay, I can stand; or should I kneel, my plight

Were one with my new fortune. You may go:

I have but private penitence to do, And privy grace to get me; for indeed

I were stark mad to hope by any mean

For public pardon; I am condemned, and have

No hope but of such pity as dead men

Who living found no grace in the great world.

[Exit ARTHUR ERSKINE.

Now, what death, sir? Darnley. You think not as you speak;

Your thought has other business than your tongue,

And death has no part in it.

Queen. I am assured

I must not live.

Darnley. Whose doom has passed on

Not mine; I would not have you go in fear:

You may be safe as I am. Queen. As you, my lord?

I think I may, and yet may chance but find

A little day of surety. Darnley. By mine honor,

My word and place of sovereignty is pledged

For your fair usage; they that unseat you

Shall find no king in me.

Queen. Nay, I think not.

Darnley. As they would have me friend and firm to them,

I told them, they should use you royally,

No state or privilege plucked off you;

I have no thought by stolen strength of yours

To increase myself out of your weakness; only

I would have royalty remade in you, And in your honor an honorable part; See the state in you and the name shine

And in your praise mine own praise perfected

As parcel of it, and in your good fame Mine own fame stablished; as from your repute

Shaken or sullied, my name too takes

soil,

And in your insufficience I wax weak, So would I have the grace I gain and strength

Redound to you-ward; who being queen

indeed,

I cannot seem unkingly.

Queen. 'Tis well thought.

It was my curse to know not in good time

How high a sense and royal of itself I had in you so near me.

Darnley. That your thought,

Misdeeming me worth no more weight with you,

Hath brought us to this breach. Now lies it in you

To make all whole; these lords that in my name

And for mine ends and with my leave

To rid out peril and scandal from us all, And make red-handed witness of themselves

Against the shame and scathe of royalty,

Are not the traitors of your thought, but keep

Faith flawless toward the personal empire here

And spirit of rule, dishonoring not the law

By forceful chastisement of secret

breach
That did it bloodless violence; this

That did it bloodless violence; this blood shed

Must heal indeed the privy hurt of law

And all but death of kingship, in such pass

Wasted and wounded: but no hand of

Wasted and wounded; but no hand of theirs

Would stab through you your holy majesty,

Cut off all life of law, with yours, and make

Authority die with you one visible death;

No thought put out your office, though yourself

Were found come short thereof, to leave this land A kingless kingdom; wherefore with

good-will

I counsel you make peace with their

designs

And friends with mine intent, which for

And friends with mine intent, which for us both

Is but all power and honor. Queen. So you see it;

But were your eyes no flatterers of themselves,

The sight were other: yet for my poor part

I cannot care though power be out of sight,

Save that mine honor visibly is marred By wreck in you of either; for indeed

Nor power nor honor shall hang on to you

If you must wear them but at will of men,

And by strange leave of chance authority

Reign or not reign. But all concerns me not:

Rule as you may, be lord of that you can,

I can contend not with your lords, or you,

Their master-servant. Pardon me, I am weak,

A feeble simple woman, without stay, And witless of your worth; yet I might

fear
Their policies were no good friends of

yours,
Could we see all. Men's hearts are

manifold,

Not made of glass like women's such as mine,

At once transpicuous and perceptible
To eyes like yours that look their faults
through; yet

Perchance you see more faults than lie there, spots

That are not natural to us; or make too much

Of our light thoughts and weakness; yet, your pardon:

You have reason in it, being more wise than we,

And stronger in your regency of soul; It may be you do well to bear me hard, And I do ill who think to counsel you; 'Tis no great matter; for in no great while

My weakness will be medicine to itself, And end as I do: no default of mine But must by dying be curable; and God knows

I little think to live.

Darnley. Why, have no fear;

You see I stand 'twixt you and all such threat.

Queen. Nay, I see not; but though you be my friend,

How far soever you stand out for me, There is one threat that no man's help in the world

Can bring to nothing: here it speaks in me

Mortal; I know the word inevitable
That without breath or sound has called
me dead;

I would not plead against it. Darnley. Nay, you dream; You jest or dream.

Queen. I do not : I am dead.

What! have you slain in jest, or in a dream

Have I seen death, and felt him in my flesh,

Felt my blood turn, and my veins fill with death,

And the pang pass and leave me as I am,

Dead? for my state is pangless, and my pain

Periched: I have no life to bring forth

Perished: I have no life to bring forth

Or painful fruit of life; I think in pity God willed one stroke of sheer mortality

Should kill all possible pain and fear in me,

All after-chance of ill; I cannot die

Twice, and can live not with my dead self here

Violently slain. I am sure I have no child.

I would but pray, if I had breath to pray, For mere shame's sake and pity's, I might have

My women with me; and was not born to want

What our most poor bare natural womanhood

Seeks not in vain of meanest people:

I seek of no man's mercy.

Darnley. You shall have it;
But this is fear and shaken heart in
you—

I trust not very danger. Queen. I that know

Must bear the peril and the sense alike, And patiently can bear, so but I have

Hope of your heart made soft towards me; sir,

Howe'er I have been untoward and confident

In my blind state and sovereign folly, now

God knows me if I have not need of love

Who have so much of pardon. Darnley. Is this sure,

Such instant and such perilous press of time, —

Or but your thought it may be? Queen. Nay, my thought!

Is it my thought I am stricken to my death?

Is it my thought you have no pity of me?

Is it my thought I had looked at other time

For other joy of childbed, and such pangs

As bring glad women honor? not this death

That sunders me from fruit of mine own years

And youth and comfort, and mere natural hope,

And love that looks on many a worse than me?

Is it my thought that for small fault of mine,

And little lack of love and duteousness, I am brought to shame and mortal chastisement?

Is it my thought love is not dead in me For all this chastening? and my peni-

Wherewith I weep on my least wrongdoings past,

And faith wherewith I look for pardon

For grace of you—is all this but my thought?

Darnley. By heaven, I will not have you wronged of them.

You shall live safe and honorably.

Queen. My lord,

Who lives in such times honorably or safe,

When change of will and violence mutable

Makes all state loose and rootless? Think you, men

Who have dipped their hands in this red act with you

Will, as they wash them, so wash off their hearts

The burning spot of raw malignity And fire and hunger of ambition made So proud and full of meat, so rank in strength,

So grossly fed and fattened with fresh

blood?

Is it for love of your name more than

These men that fought against my love of you, And made rebellious wars on my free

choice, Smite now my very head and crown of

In this night's hot and present stroke? Be sure

it is the throne, the name, the power in That here is stabbed and bleeds from

such a wound As draws out life of you no less than

If you be part of majesty indeed.

Yea, howsoe'er you be now borne in

They will but use you as an axe to smite,

A brand to set on fire the house of state

And in the doing be burnt up of itself. Why, do but think with now more temperate blood

What are they that have helped you to this deed?

What friends to you? what faith toward royalty,

And what good-will and surety of sound mind,

Have you found in them? or how put in proof?

What bond have their loves given you to confirm

Their hearts toward you stable? Nay, if this

Be all my pledge for honor and safe life.

They slide upon a slippery ground indeed.

Darnley. The pledge is mine, not theirs: you have my word;

No warrant of their giving, but of me. What ails you to go yet in fear of them? Queen. Alas! I know not whom I need yet fear.

What men were they who helped you to this deed?

Yet it avails not me to know. I think The fierce first root of violence was

Of you nor of your uncles, though I know

They of your mother's kinship love me not; But though their hearts, albeit one

blood with yours, Be bitter toward me, yet being of your blood

I would fain think them not so hard; and yet

It was no gentle sight I had of them,

Nor usage; I can see their eyes burn

And their brows meet against me. Such a sight

Again might wind all suffering up in

And give it full release. Darnley. It was their plot;

That is, for love of me they felt the offence

Eat at their hearts. I did not set them on;

But wrath and shame's suspicion for my sake

Edged and envenomed; then your policies too,

And injuries done the popular weal, the

So far mishandled, — this was all men's talk.

Mine uncle's chiefly, Ruthven's, and his word

Was hot in the ear of Maitland and

Argyle, Showing the wrong done and the further fear,

More wide in issue and large in likelihood

Than all wrong done already; nay, and plain;

You would have given the state up to strange hands,

And for strange ends; no dreaming doubt of mine,

But very vision, proof: they held it so; And, by my faith, I with them.

Oueen. Morton too?

Was not his wit part of your wisdom?

Darnley. Ay;

Why, all heads highest, all subtlest, could not choose

But be one judgment and one counsel here,
In such a biting need; yea, common

fools, Poor senseless knaves might see it.

Queen. Yea, visibly.
The sharpest wits and hands put armor

To go forth strong against me; little doubt

But fools and ignorance and the com-

The very dust o' the street, the dross of man,

Must needs take fire with blowing of such wind,

And stir at such men's passage: their mere feet

Moving would raise me up such enemies

From the bare ground. Ruthven — you said his breath

Was first to heat men's hearing with strange words

And set their hearts on edge; and at his touch

The quick-eyed Maitland and loosesouled Argyle,

Keen to catch fire or fear from other men's;

And the full-counselled Morton — by my life

(That's but a little oath now) I think strange

To be at all alive, and have such men So sore unfriends and secret, and their wits

So sharp to set upon so slight a thing. How grew this up amongst you?

Darnley. Why, you see it;

No need to set men on; their swords
were made

Of your own follies; yet have comfort;

That was so little made of, so less worth,
In your late judgment, will alone be

guard
And buckler of you; come what coun-

sel may, It shall not hold against you with my

will,
And cannot work without.

Queen. Nay, that were hard.

I thank you; but what counsel will they take,

Think you, which way to deal with me?
My soul

Is womanly distempered and distract With doubts of them: no fear of your good mind,

Of your firm love and fruitful; but, alas!

I am no strong man as you my guard, and ache

With new faint fear of their fresh angers: then,

This watch on me, my ways and rooms barred up,

No help nor issue, shakes and sickens

With pangs for every stroke in the hour, that says

I am so much more time prisoner.

Darnley. For your guard,

It must be later taken off; the rest
I will find mean of help for. They are
now

In council with your brother, new

brought home

With seal from me of pardon to reverse Your fresh and rash attainder, in my name

Now cancelled and made strengthless;

and I think

There must three judgments be debated of,—

Whether, for hurt done to the common state

And treason to succession, you must

bear

Penance of death, or life's imprisonment,

Which fear not I will have them put in form,

Nor see it pass upon you; the third mean

Is for some season that you be in ward In Stirling Castle, till your warrant given

And free consent to this late justice

And to the new faith stablished in the

realm
By right and rule of law, religiously,

And to mine own investiture as king.

Now for no fear at all or doubt of them,

But very love and good desire toward

you,

I will go plead your part, and take them

sign
Of seasonable submission; with which

I doubt not but to reconcile their thoughts.

And bring their loves back bounden to your feet.

Queen. Neither do I doubt. Let them draw this bond,

I will set hand to what they will of me.
To seal you king needs now no grace
of mine,

Hardly my leave; and for their faith, it has

Too firm a foot for my poor power to shake,

Had I the will now molten in me strong As ere the fire of herce necessity

Had made it soft and edgeless; for their deed, Say, if they hold my word of pardon

worth

More than mere scorn, I am bound to thank them, being

Masters of me and of my wrath or will, And needing show me no such courtesy; And if it please them take mine oath and hand

To sign them safe, and mark them from all charge

Sackless and scatheless, let them take

it; alas!
I thought well they might rather take

my life, And yet I think well they would take

indeed
But for your safeguard of me; would

they not
Slay me? nay, by your honor tell me—

nay, I know they would, had I no guard in

Slav me defenceless.

Darnley. Have no fear: I have sworn

They shall not touch you roughly.

Queen. Swear again, That I may quite rest confident; and

yet Swear not; I would not seem to hold you fast

To your own peril; better were I dead Than you fell in their danger for my sake.

Ah! and I know not, I may hardly think I have you surely on my side.

Darnley. By heaven,

You shall want nothing of my help or love.

Queen. How had you heart to go so near my death?

Darnley. I had no mind to hurt you. Queen. None? well, none—

I will not think it; yet I was nigh dead. You saw my very death here at my breast

Where your child is not yet - I did not think

To feel instead there murder's iron lips For his soft suckling mouth.

Darnley. Come, think not of it

Queen. I had not time to think of it indeed.

But I think now you will have hardly power

To match your will to save me, if their

Shall yet be mortal to me: then I saw You had not power, or had not will; and now

I know not which you have yet. Darnley. They shall find

I have power enough and will to turn them.

Queen. Well -

I lean, then, on your hand. If you were mine.

Though they were subtler and more strong in hate,

They should not hold me here in peril.

Darnley. How?
Queen. No matter, so their guard

were less on me.

Darnley. You would take flight,
then?

Queen. Ay, with you for wing To lift me out of prison.

Darnley. Whither?

Queen. Nay,
I am but the fool of your keen flattering wit,

Who let you see my little hope that lives

To see my some day sunnier: yet God knows

Without light of you it were lustreless.

I can look forth not, or heave up my hand,

But with your help to stay me.

Darnley. Surely no,

As you stand now, you cannot; and I were

A faithless fool to mine own fortune, if I loosed you out of sight for wantonness,

Who have you now in hand: but for all this

It may be flight were no such unwise mean

To assure our free and mutual power on them,

And show them simply subject; as it is,

They have some show of hold on us which makes

Our reign and freedom questionable and slight:

I see some reason in it.

Queen. Why, do you think

That you being here their gaoler in their eye

Can be their king too, or not rather they

Lords both of gaol and warder? they will hold you

But as the minister of their power on me,

Of no more office than a doorkeeper Nor honor than their headsman; but

fled hence
You are very king indeed, by your own
hand,

Lord of the life you give and majesty, By no man's furtherance and no grant of theirs

Made pensioner and proxy for their reign

Who should bear rule and you the semblance, worn

As mask of all their faces, glove of hands,

And hollow trumpet blown of all their mouths,

But mine and all their free and sovereign king.

Darnley. Why, so I say; they must be borne in hand.

Look you, we must not set their fears on edge;

They shall suspect not: I will take them word,

And bring them to you for your bond.

Queen. Meantime,

I will but walk an hour here hand in hand

With my good brother; let me speak to him

While they shall draw the schedule.

Darnley. I will bid him
Attend you, and your women; but be

You take him not to counsel: he is wise,

And full of malice; let him not be

Of our new mind.

Queen. He shall not.

Darnley. But you smile:

What should he do to know it? Oueen. He shall not know.

Darnley. Well, you shall see him, and they take off your guard;

I will make sure: but when and by what means

Think you to fly? Queen. To-night.

Darnley. God help your wit!

To-night?

Queen. Before the change of watch; I have said:

Weak as I stand, and burdened, and soul-spent,

I will be hence. Mistrust me not for

strength; My soul shall make my body like itself, A servant armed to wait upon my

thought And page my purpose as its minister Till the end be held in hand. This

guard removed, I will find ways out to win forth to-

night, Fear not, and servants. Go now to

the lords With all submissive mild report of me, And bring them to receive my word

and hand To confirmation of what bond they please

For pardon and possession of their will;

And for your kingship - sir, assure vourself

That in few hours it shall be seen and sure

You shall need never seek their loves again,

Or hands to help you to it, or tongues to cry,

Nor be called king by will of any man, Nor lord by choice of any friend on earth.

Darnley. Nay, I would heed no voices.

Queen. And be sure

You shall not build your power on loves of theirs,

Nor live by their election. Go, and I would have all their heads here in thrive:

Think how my faith and hope and love in you

Find all their rest and stronghold, and on them

Set up your trust and standard of your strength.

[Exit DARNLEY. So much is done; go thou, then, first to death;

For from this hour I have thee. - Heart, lie still.

Till I may make those mightier traitors mine

That shall be swords for me to smite him with,

And then be free as fire.

Enter MARY BEATON.

Hast thou no news? Mary Beaton. The lord of Bothwell lies at secret ward

To bear you forth of peril here by force;

He has gathered up his men beyond the walls

To break this guard upon you when you will, If at your suit it shall not be with-

drawn; Here is his token brought me privily

For your own hand.

Queen. No, in my heart it is, My love and lord, thy token; this poor heart,

That, ere mine ear is smitten with thy name,

Hears it, and turns to springing fire. What thanks

Would I not rather pay than these of words

For this thy loving speed? Yet send him these,

And bid him, I would fain say come but wait

Till I have tried my traitors; if m/ tongue

Win them to slack their hold on me to-night,

We may speed surelier; if their hands hold fast, Then let him smite and slay and set me

free. my lap, Fell him, not one or two slain suddenly,

That their blood shed may seem not

spilt by chance,

Nor lost and won in hazard of affray, But sacrificed by judgment, and their names

Who would have made of royalty in

Ruin, and marred the general name of king.

Shall with their lives be perfectly put

Royally ruined; wherefore if I may I will steal forth with subtle help of words.

Not break their bonds with violence; in which hope

Bid him watch close.

[Exit MARY BEATON.
And when his watch is done

It will be morning, and the sun shall break

As fire for them that had their hour by night

And light for wrath to see them and to slay.

Re-enter ARTHUR ERSKINE, introducing

MURRAY.

Arthur Erskine. Madam, my lord of

Murray.

Oueen. Ah! my brother,

Had you been here, they had not used me thus.

Murray. I am sorry, madam, such things should be done

As even the strain of sharp necessity Can make but fierce and bitter.

Queen. Is this all?

Nay, it was necessary then and just, Or I must seem and strive to think it

If you say so. But in my present sight, Now when a feather's or a flower's weight borne

Might make life stoop within me, sense break down,

All strong capacities of nature fail; Now when the hardest heart with iron bound

Might turn to very mercy for my sake, Here in mine eye to do my friend to

For howsoe'er ye hold him, yet being dead

I will not say but he was friend of mine

Who lies now dead and slaughtered, — nay, by heaven,

I will not cast that name of friend away Because the man my friend is slain for me,—

I say, to kill him at my knee, to stain An unborn child's brow with his mur-

dered blood, To affray with sanguine hands, shake

with sheer blows,
The weak and holy warders of the
womb.

The reverence and remembrance of us

For that which bare us hidden before

And after was called mother, — oh, this deed,

This, though all law were cast out of the world,

All grace forgotten, — this, you will not say

But they did ill who did it. What! you weep?

These tears are made of our dear father's blood,

Who left in each of us such part of him As must yearn each toward other, and divide

At need their mutual suffering: I knew well

I need not fear to find not in your heart Some natural seed of comfort.

Murray. That I weep

I take no shame, to see you; but mine eyes

Receive more comfort than their tears

To see, for all this rash and ruthless night,

Yet you stand up unwounded, and your heart

Is left you to put spirit in your speech
Not like a sick man's. If you have no
hurt,

No hurt is done, though they did violently;

For this man's life was as a present death

To the well-being and peace of all your

Which, by the force of justice done on him.

Stands now in surety. I would pray you make

Your profit of your pain herein, being wise,

As you well may; for this was not the

That you saw slain, but the man's policy,

Stabbed through with all their daggers; and you see

How it lies dead and outcast. I beseech you,

For your own love and honor of high rule,

Set not your heart toward it to raise it up

That men would bury, lest the graveyard reek

Of dead men's craft and strange men's creeds brought back

Prove poison to you.

Queen. I will do what men will.

I must not die, then?

Murray. There are those would have it

For scandal and offence cast on the realm

By shame done to the popular commonwealth

In majesty made shameful; as they say

Through you it hath been, and your dealings known

With this dead friend: some that would leave you life

Spake of life spent in sharp imprisonment

Unto your death's day; but by mine

Unto your death's day: but by mine award

You are quit of either danger; you must live

But under guard till you by word approve

This man's despatch for necessary and just,

Submit yourself to call your husband king,

And own the true faith rooted in this realm

For lawful and for sovereign here of rule.

So much you shall.

Queen. Nay, I will more than this.
I will seal now what you will have me seal.

What bond soever: let them come to me,

Who wrought this murderous matter but last night,

That I may sign their pardon with my tongue

Ere they can crave or threaten. Let them come:

So shall my perfect purpose be more plain

Freely in all things to submit myself—
I have your word already—to their will:

Ay, even with all my new submissive heart,

As else I cannot choose; for what am I, That I should think much to submit myself?

Murray. You shall do wisely to keep faith with them,

And make your word your action's measure: so

Shall hearts now loosened from you be made fast,

And love reclaimed wait on you loyally Through all your land's length. See, the lords are come.

Enter Darnley, Morton, and Ruthven.

Queen. Good morrow, sirs; ye gave me no good night,

Yet are you welcome even as life or death

Were welcome to me, coming with your will:

For without love of my good lords my life

Were scarce worth holding out against their will;

But, if it please them I should die not yet,

For their love's sake I give it welcome. Sirs,

I have heard what terms ye lay upon mine head,

And bow beneath them willingly, being

It is but meet I should submit myself, It is but fit mere majesty bow down

To take the burden by good men and wise

Imposed upon it; nor shall this be hard:

For what ye did so suddenly and swift, If there be power of pardon in me, here With as good heart even as ye did the

Do I forgive it; nay, I should give you thanks

That ye vouchsafe of me to be forgiven; For what am I among you? Let the bond

Be drawn between us presently to sign, While for an hour's space I will walk and wait

Here with my noble brother, hand in hand,

And heart reposed on heart, eyes answering eyes,

With pure plain faith: for what now in the world

Should lies or dumb dissembling profit me,

Though I were natural liar? as I do trust

Ye shall not find me, but most faithful; yet,

If I were falser than the foam of the sea,

And wilfuller than wind, what should I do,

Being yours, to mock you and myself, and lie

Against mine own life? for ye see me, sirs,
How I stand bare between you, without

strength,
At your mere mercy, with no friend on earth

If ye will be mine unfriends; and I

think
To live but by your grace and leave,
who might,

If ye were minded, speak me out of life Or sign me dead with smiling; I were mad

To play with lies, who feel your hands on me

So heavy as they are, and have no hope Save to be pitied and believed of you.

I pray you, then, have faith in me, who

In your faith only, and, if it fail me here, Must die the lowliest death in all the world,

And no man's hand to help me.

Darnley. She says truth:

There is no hand.

Morton. Madam, though faith stand fast,

Yet fear hath something here to say of you,

And wisdom to remember. We must

think

Chat what is done in service of yourself

That what is done in service of yourself You cannot hold good service when it comes

So masked in blood, so vizarded like death,

As this of ours doth; and that yet in time

You may find mean to wreak your wrath on us

For having strangely served you, and perforce

Given desperation and the dangerous time

So desperate a deliverance from despair.

We have saved you in this service done the state,

Who must have else been broken in the breach
Of the state's order and the popular

Of the state's order and the popular law,
By this man living violently misused;

But cannot hope yet for such thanks of you

As even the deed deserves whose fierce

despatch

Has shaken you with thunder and its

Has shaken you with thunder, and its flame Still makes your eyes blind to the good

work done,
And sharp need felt of it: so must this

And sharp need felt of it: so must this be,

And so must we take heed lest, being yet blind,

We give you scope and mean to hurt yourself.

Queen. I did not think the thing was yet alive

That could fear me.

Darnley. Nay, look you, she says right:

We have no room to fear her.

Queen. Lo, my lords,

How dangerous and how strong a thing

That threatens here your state and safety! see,

It is no less than woman, and unarmed, Half dead, unfriended, hard on childbearing,

Naked of arms or means: it were not

To leave unguarded, without spies or swords

About her path, so great a danger; yea, Wise men would rather fear her force too much,

Than good men show compassion. Do your wills:

I am well content to know you wise, and so

To bear what hard or lighter weight ye please:

How sore soever, God knows, I believe It shall not long afflict me.

Murray. In my mind,

It now shall less distract the general

With apprehension of strange times and strife,

To see the ways again made clear, and

Not crowded up with guard.

Darnley. Why, so I said.

Ruthven. So I say not. Bear with me though I seem

Less confident or free of heart than

Whose minds are gentle as their names, should be

In things of common care: what hurt may come

By fault of us, we know not, but we know

It is no private peril; if we err.

Not we nor ours must only ache for

But the whole popular heart of this great land Must bleed and break for our false

friendship shown, And confident remission of our cause And very duty toward her, through mere wish

To be called gentle toward her ene

Queen. I am her enemy, then: where lies my strength?

What field? what weapon? how shall we make war.

Take truce and break it, with what equal face

Stand brow to brow for battle? By this hand.

I knew not yet how strong it was, nor worth

How many hands of swordsmen: were this true.

I might wax proud to be so terrible, Seeing in such great men's eyes so great a fear,

And only mine own fearful face therein As in a mirror shadowed.

Darnley. 'Tis mere truth:

We should be shamed to seem in fear of her.

Yea, made a mockery in men's eyes and mouths

For base and blind misgiving.

Ruthven. You, my lords

And equals with me in the proof of years,

In the age of counsel and experience

Of common service done our natural

Shall best pass judgment, if in hate or

I speak for mine own ends or enmities To turn your hearts from honor. For the queen,

As she shall be toward God, so I toward

Would be fast friend and servant; but wherein

She is not friend with heaven nor with the state,

I were no friend to serve her, nor to say There were no danger and no sin to

serve. Ye must all think I think not to live

And being so signed of sickness for my

grave With such a mortal seal, I speak alive As one being dead that speaketh: if ye lose

The grace of God here won by your own hands,

The power ye have to serve him, and

Of his good hour, through negligence of will,

Or pride or pity, ye shall see the state Break from your hands, and, for one devil cast out.

Seven entered in its body. Sirs, take heed:

The least thing lightly overlooked or done

May undo all things wrought. Keep

fast your guards;
By the king's counsel if they be withdrawn.

Upon his head that bade them go shall

What bloodshed ever follows: yet in

Think nothing weak that is not with us;

May have some sting or weapon of itself

That till sloth feel it sees not.

Queen. A wise rule:

So should the wary wolf pen up the lambs,

The falcon set good guard upon the wren,

For fear of teeth or talons.

Murray. We will give

To the king's hand the bond for yours to sign:

Meantime all ease and reverence shall you have,

And freedom for your household folk to serve

As best your need may bid them.

Queen. Sirs, farewell.

I will not pray you do but what ye will, Which shall seem wisely to me. — Let me have

Word of their instant sentence. [Aside to DARNLEY.]

Darnley (aside). With all speed. [Exeunt DARNLEY, MURRAY, MORTON, and RUTHVEN.

Queen. Where are my servants Standen and Traquair?

Arthur Erskine. At hand to serve your highness.

Queen. Ah, to serve!

My highness is brought low, too low to claim

Service of men; if I may find but love Or only pity of any, this shall be All utmost service I desire of them.

I have but my sorrows to my subjects left,

And these rebellious; yet I keep what state

And rule I may upon them. Tell those twain

I pray their patience lend me but the time

To hear what I would have them, and to choose

If they will do it for pity.

Arthur Erskine. Think them here,
And your will done already. [Exit

Queen. Yea, my will!

What knowest thou may my will be?
By this light,

I feel a heat and hurry of the heart
That burns like joy; my blood is light
and quick,

And my breath comes triumphantly as

That has long labored for a mountainous goal,

And sets fast foot on the utmost cliff of all.

If ere the race be run my spirit be glad, What when it puts the palm of peril

And breathes clear air, and conquers? Nay, I think

The doubt itself and danger are as food To strengthen and bright wine to quicken me,

And lift my heart up higher than my need.

Though that be high upon me.

Re-enter Erskine with Traquair and Standen.

Now, my friends,

Ye come unlike to courtiers, come to serve

Me most unlike a queen: shall I think
yet

I have some poor part in your memories

I have some poor part in your memories safe,

And you some care of what I was, and thought

How I fare now? Shall I take up my

That was cast down into the pit of death,

To keep the name God gave me, and the seal

That signs me royal, by your loves and faiths

Recrowned and reinstated? Say but no, Or say but naught, this hope of mine and heart

Are things as dead as yesterday: my cause

Lies in your lips, to comfort or confound,

As ye see reason. Yet, as power is yours,

So let remembrance in you be for light To see the face of the time by; so let faith.

Let noble pity and love be part of you, To make you mindful what a cause it is That ye must put in judgment, and what life

For fame or shame to you through all time born

Ensues upon your sentence; for ye choose

If ye will match my dangers with your faiths,

And help me helpless with your hearts, who lie

By grief and fear made heartless; or lend hand

To make my weakness weaker, and break down

My broken wall of sovereignty; which

We wot were no sore labor. Standen. Let him die

As heartless toward the grace of God, who hath

No heart in him to give its blood for yours!

Traquair. So say we all your servants.

Queen. Did I know it?

Methinks I knew, when I bade send for you,

Ye should so say. Ah, friends! I had no fear

But I should find me friends in this fierce world,

Or I had died unfriended. Shall I thank you

For being the true men and the kind ye are, Or take your service thankless, since I

thought Ye could not else, being young and of

your kinds,
But needs must be my help? ye have

not hearts

To strike, but at men weaponed; ye

would not

Lay hard hand on a woman weak with child,

A sick sad woman that was no man's queen

Of all that stood against her; yet her son, The unborn thing that pleads again with you

As it could plead not with them, this dumb voice,

This sightless life and sinless, was their king's,

If ever they would let it come to life. Lo, here their aim was; here the wearons went,

That should have stabbed to death the race of kings,

And cut their stem down to the root; here, here

The pistol's mouth that bruised my breast, the hand

That struck athwart my shoulder, found their mark,

Made here their point to shoot at: in my womb

By them the bud of empire should have died,

That yet by you may live, and yet give thanks

For flower and fruit to them that saved the seed.

Standen. They shall die first.

Traquair. Command us what next way

There is to serve you: though the way were fire,

We would be through it.

Queen. To-night, then, at first watch.

I purpose with the man's help—nay,
what name

Shall his be now? king, husband, or, God help,

King's father? — with the man that you called king

As I called husband, to win forth of bonds

By the close covered passage underground

That by strange turns and strait blind working ways

Winds up into the sovereign cemetery Whose dust is of my fathers; therewithout

Wait you with horse; and when you see us rise Out of the hollow earth among the

dead, Be ready to receive and bear us thence. Some two hours' haste will speed us to Dunbar.

Where friends lie close, and whence with sudden strength

I trust to turn on these good lords again.

Do this for such poor love's sake as your queen's,

And if there be thanks worthy in the world.

Them shall she give; not silver, sirs, nor gold,

Nor the coined guerdon that is cast on

To coin them into senice; but a heart, If not worth love, yet loving, and a faith

That will die last of all that dies in me, And last of all remembrances foregone Let your names go. God speed you, and farewell.

SCENE II. - RUINS OF THE ABBEY OF HOLVROOD.

Enter ARTHUR ERSKINE, TRAQUAIR, and STANDEN.

Standen. It must be time; the moon is sick and slow

That should by this be higher. Arthur Erskine. It is your eye

Whose sight is slow as sickness; for the moon

Is seasonable and full: see where it burns

Between the bare boughs and the broken tombs

Like a white flower whose leaves were fire: the night

Is deep and sharp wherein it hangs, and heaven

Gives not the wind a cloud to carry,

Fails one faint star of all that fill their

To lend our flight its comfort; we shall have

Good time of heaven and earth. Traquair. How shall the steeds

Be shared among us?

Arthur Erskine. If she keep her mind.

My English gelding best shall bear the

And him the Naples courser. Hark! they come.

Standen. It was a word said of the wind to hear

What earth or death would answer. These dead stones Are full of hollow noises, though the

vault Give tongue to no man's tootfall: when

they come, It will speak louder. Lo, how straight that star

Stands over where her face must break from earth

As it hath broken! it was not there before.

But ere she rise is risen. I would not give

The third part of this night between us shared

For all the days that happiest men may live,

Though I should die by morning. Traquair. Till she come.

I cannot choose but with my fears take thought,

Though all be after her sweet manner done

And by her wise direction, what strange

And what foul peril with so faint a

guard Must of so tender feet be overpast

Ere she win to us.

Arthur Erskine. All these with laughing lips

Shall she pass through; the strength and spring of soul

That set her on this danger will sustain Those feet till all her will and way be

Her spirit is to her body as a staff. And her bright fiery heart the traveller's lamp

That makes all shadow clear as its own light.

Enter from the vaults the QUEEN and DARNLEY.

Queen. Here come the wind and stars at once on us;

How good is this good air of that full

heaven That drives the fume back of the sepulchres.

And blows the grave away! Have no more fear;

These are no dead men.

Darnley. Nay, I fear no dead; Nothing I fear, of quick or dead, but

God. Shall I not go before you? Queen. Not a foot.

See you, my friends, what valiant hearts are here,

My lord's and mine, who hardly have crept forth,

In God's fear only, through the charnelhouse.

Among the bones and skulls of ancient kings

That thought not shame to stand for stumbling-stones

In their poor daughter's way, whose heart had failed.

But that his hardier heart held up her

Who even if winds blew did not shrink nor shake

For fear of aught but God. The night is kind,

And these March blasts make merry with the moon

That laughs on our free flight. Where stand your steeds?

Arthur Erskine. Madam, hard by in shadow of the stones;

Please you, this way.

Queen. I will to horse with you. Darnley. No, but with me. Queen. It is not my good will.

Ride you alone, and safer. - Friend, your arm.

SCENE III. - MURRAY'S LODGING DIN HOLYROOD.

Enter MURRAY, MORTON, and RUTHVEN.

Morton. There is no present help: the violent speed

Of these fierce days has run our chances down.

It is found certain she comes back today;

Soon as their flight drew bridle at Dunbar,

Yet hot from horse, she sends for Bothwell in,

With all his border thievery, red-foot knaves.

The hardiest hinds of Liddesdale; next him

His new bride's brother, Huntley, more in care

To win the land back than revenge the blood

His father lost for treason; after these Caithness with Athol, and the queen's chief strengths,

The earl marshal and the archbishop; in few days

Eight thousand swords to wait on that sweet hand

Was worth so little manhood; then Argyle, Who should have been a sea-wall on

our side

Against the foam of all their faction,

Struck to the heart with spite and sharp despair

Through proof late made of English faith, - as you,

My lord of Murray, felt it when ye twain

Sought help, and found false heart there, — casts himself

Over upon her side; with him two more Her last year's rebels, Rothes and Glencairn.

And pardon sealed for all that rose with them

Who were not of our counsel in this death.

Thus fare we without help or hope of these.

And from the castle here of Edinburgh The hot Lord Erskine arms in our offence

His mounted guns, making the queen more strong

Than had her flight won first its darkling walls,

And for a free camp in the general field

Set up her strength within the fortress

Which serves her now for outwork, while behind

The whole force raised comes trooping to her hand.

In this deep strait that our own hands have dug

And our own follies channelled, to let

Storm on our sails and shipwreck on our hopes,

My counsel is that whoso may stand fast Should here in harbor bide his better

day, And we make land who may not: you,

my lord, As by James Melville she solicits you, May honorably assure your peace with

Being speckless in her sight of this man's blood;

We that dipped open hand in it must hence,

And watch the way of the wind and set of storm

Till the sea sink again.

Ruthven. Sir, so say I;

You serve not us a whit nor change our chance

By tarrying on our side. Let no man

For our deed's sake, but we that made our deed

The witness for us not to be gainsaid By foe of ours or friend we have on earth. It was well done; what else was done, and ill,

We must now bear the stroke of, and devise

Some healing mean in season. This is sure,

That faith or friendship shall have no long life

Where friendship is ingraffed on breach of faith;

But shame, despite, division, and distrust

Shall eat the heart out of their amity,

And hate unreconcile their heartless hands

Whom envious hope made fast, or cunning fear.

This cannot be but nigh; and ye that live

Shall see more sure for this blind hour's default,

And hold more fast, and watch more heedfully,

The new chance given, for this chance cast away.

I shall not see it, how near soe'er; and yet

The day that I shall die in banishment Is not much nigher than must their doom's day be

Whose trust is in the triumph of their hour.

Mine is now hard on end; but yours shall last,

I doubt not, till its service be all done, And comfort given our people. Take the Lairds

Grange and Pittarrow with you to the queen.

Ye shall find peace and opportunity With present welcome as for proffered

love;
Make swift agreement with her; this shall be

The surest staff that hope may take in hand.

Farewell.

Murray. I would not say it, if ye not knew

My faith departs not with me from your side,

Nor leaves the heart's bond broken of our loves;

But in this trust, though loath, I take farewell.

To give you welcome ere the year be dead.

Ruthven. Me shall you not, nor see my face again,

Who ere the year die must be dead; mine eyes

Shall see the land no more that gave them light,

But fade among strange faces; yet, if aught

I have served her, I should less be loath to leave

This earth God made my mother.

Murray. Then farewell,

As should his heart who fares in such wise forth

To take death's hand in exile. I must fare,

Ill now or well I know not; but I deem I have as much as you of banishment, Who bear about me but the thought of yours.

### SCENE IV. - HOLYROOD.

The QUEEN and SIR JAMES MELVILLE. Queen. Am I come back to be controlled again,

And of men meaner? must I hold my

peace Or set my face to please him? Nay,

you see How much miscounselled is he, strayed how far

From all men's hope and honor, and to

How strange and thankless, whom in self-despite

You will me yet to foster: I would live Rather the thrall of any hind on earth. Melville. I would but have your wisdom hide somewhile

The sharpness of your spirit, whose edge of wrath

There is no man but now sees manifest:

fest;
As there is none who knows him that

hath cause
To love or honor; yet great pity it is

To see what nobler natural mind he had,

And the first goodness in him so put out

By cursed counsel of his mother's kin, The bastard Douglas, and such ill friends else

As most are unfriends: but this fire in you

Who chose him, being so young, of your own will,

Against the mind of many, for your lord,

Shall rather burn yourself than purge his mood,

And the open passion of your heart and

And the open passion of your heart and hate

Hearten in him the hate he bears not

But them that part you from him.

Twice, you know,—

Or now my tongue were less for love's

saké bold, — Twice hath it pleased your highness

charge me speak
When time or need might seem for

counsel: then
That thus you charged me, now such
need is come,

Forgive that I forget not.

Queen. I might well, Did you forget, forgive not; but I know Your love forgot yet never any charge That faith to me laid on it; though I

think
I never bade you counsel me to bear
More than a queen might worthily no

More than a queen might worthily, nor sought

To be advised against all natural will,

That with mine honor now is joined to speak

And bid me bear no more with him,

since both
Take part against my patience. For

his hate, Henceforth shall men more covet it

than fear; My foot is on its head, that even to-

Shall yield its last poor power of poison

And live to no man's danger till it die.

Enter DARNLEY and MURRAY.

Welcome, dear brother and my worthy lord,

Who shall this day by your own word be clear

In all men's eyes that had ill thoughts of you.

Brother, to-day my lord shall purge himself.

By present oath before our councillors, Of any part in David's murdered blood, And stand as honorable in sight of all Whose thought so wronged him as in mine he doth

Who ever held him such as they shall

Murray. Must he swear this?

Darnley. Who says I shall not swear? Queen. He has given his faith to swear so much to-day,

And who so shameless or so bold alive

As dare doubt that?

Murray. Not I: in God's name, no;

No more than any other. Darnley. Nay then, well:

I am not angry.

Oueen. 'Tis the noblest mood

That takes least hold on anger those faint hearts

That hold least fire are fain to show it first:

The man that knows himself most honorable

Fears least or doubts if others hold him so:

But he that has small honor in himself Is quick to doubt what men may deem of him.

And thence most swift in anger as in

Of men's imagined judgments; praised be God.

Our lord is none such. Is the deed not

That gives into our servant Bothwell's

The forfeit lands of Maitland for his

That by his former fault stand forfeited?

Murray. Is it your purpose he shall

have those lands? Queen. It is my very purpose.

Murray. I grieve at it.

my purpose yet.

We should be gone to meet our councillors;

My heart thinks long till it shall know my lord

Held of the world as noble as of me. Darnley. It is not time.

Queen. No, but much more than time Come with me, brother

Exeunt QUEEN and MURRAY Melville. I am sorry for your grace.

Darnley. You must not think I know not all this while

That she doth mock me.

Melville. Nay, her mood may change. Darnley. Never for me. I had been much better dead

Than cast off thus, who cast mine own friends off

And knew not for whose sake. She hath slain the men

Who kept that night the gates while he was slain;

I would she had rather taken too my

Than put my life to shame: yet I may

To put that off upon her; had I friends. Shame should go back from me to her, who thinks

To lay it on her wedded lord, and laugh;

As I may one day laugh yet. Hear you news

Of Morton and mine uncle? Melville. They are fled; I hear but this, not whither.

Darnley. As they brewed,

So let them drink; the hands were none of mine That mixed that cup to them; so much

I swear, And may so much with honor. Yet

would God I had not chosen to lose their loves for

And found so cold her favor! Scarce escaped,

Scarce out of bonds, half breathless yet with flight,

No mind was in her of my help, my love,

Queen. Grieve or be glad, it stands My hand that brake her prison: for all

My kin forsaken, mine own wrongs and griefs

Forgotten, mine own head imperilled,

mine

For hers that I delivered, and perchance To leave within their danger had done well,

No thought or thanks I get of her; and these

That, had I stood by them, might stand by me

When I shall need, may mock me for her fool,

And curse me for their traitor. Yet I think,

Were I once clear of her as now of these,

Please God, to make mine own strength by myself,

Being both ways free; I know not well yet how,

But I will take mine own part yet, or die. [Exeunt.

Scene V. — A Street.

Enter Two Burgesses.

First Burgess. What is this news that flies so in the dark

Like a night-bird whereof we know it is,

But of what wing we know not?

Second Burgess. This that comes

From the exiled lords in England, to make bare

The face of Darnley's falsehood, with what lips

He swore his deed away, and damned himself?

himself?
They had no sooner knowledge of such

shame,
Than word was sent of him through all the land,

Large witness of his full complicity
And conscience with them of the work

For which they groan in barren banishment

While he crawls here before the scornful queen,

And has betrayed the blood of his allies

To the axe's edge of unjust judgment.

First Burgess. One

By treason of his tongue already slain Now speaks of him with breathless mouth to God;

And Maitland and two more lie under doom

Through but his witness: yet for all this shame

It seems he has won small guerdon save the shame,

But hath his treason for his treason's fee; And this more comfort, to behold the

That by his lips, and nobler hands than his.

Was done to righteous death, and thrust in earth

Before the main door of this Abbey church,

Unearthed again, and nobly re-interred Hard by the grave's edge of Queen Magdalen,

That men may judge how near he grew alive

To the queen's side yet living; where instead

A worthier stay now in her brother

stands

For her false lord to look upon and loathe

No less than David, and much more to fear, Whom with that David he laid trains

to slay

Aforetime, and again made yount but

Aforetime, and again made vaunt but now In the queen's sight to slay him; or so

herself
Gave word to the earl, and willed him

make demand

Of the king's own false fearful mouth;

but he,
Whom thus perchance she sought to

Whom thus perchance she sought to make the sword

To pierce her husband, modestly be spake

Before her face this caitiff like a friend, And was put off with faint excuse; and yet,

Heart-wrung to see him stand, or any

Fast in her favor, like one sick with grief

The king flies forth to Glasgow, where apart

His father's head is hidden; and there

as here

He sits not in men's sight now royally, But with some six or eight goes up and down

Even where he lists, and none takes note of him;

note of mm,

While the miscounselled queen, grown high in mind,

Holds privy commerce with the brood o' the Pope

Whose plots corrupt the northward English air,

And with the murderous Irish, to put

The live light of our God from sea

With insurrection of the fires of hell And smoke of slaughter; meantime she reclaims

Of the English queen, for prisoners to

her hand.

The death-doomed lords in exile; and men say

They find scant countenance of the southern court;

Yet they think not she will deliver them. Second Burgess. One is there hath found sure deliverance;

No chain of man's can mark him prisoner more,

Nor whence he rests can any banish him;

Ruthven is dead.

First Burgess. God hath his friend, then, safe;

For God's friend he was ever; and hath died

Most fortunately, seeing not what we live

Too soon to see.

Second Burgess. He was a nobler man Than his own name was noble: no Scot born

More true to the old love of his natural land,

Nor stouter-hearted on the gospel side Of all that stood to serve it. Yet have these

As valiant servants; Morton, though cast out,

Lives secret yet in England, whence the queen

Dares not, I think, for shame's sake, yield him up

To this queen's bloody judgment, or for fear

And hostile heart she will not. We shall know

Shortly what upshot God will bring of all;

Whate'er this be, there will be none again

That shall do Darnley good.

First Burgess. I saw him swear

That day before the council; he was pale As one half drunken, stammering as in wrath,

With insolent forehead and irresolute eyes,

eyes,
Between false fear and shameful hardihood,

With frontless face that lied against it-

And trembling lips that were not yet abashed

For all their trembling.

Second Burgess. Ay, good cause was there

To shake him to the soul, having cast off

Friendship and faith of good men, yet being still

Signed with their enemies' blood too plain and broad

To gain the good-will of unrighteousness.

When his day comes that men are weary of him,

God shall strike home.

First Burgess. Then should that stroke be swift;

For evil and good alike are weary of him.

## Scene VI. — Castle of Alloa.

MURRAY and DARNLEY.

Darnley. Shall I not see her? but if I see her not

I will be wroken of you that shut me out.

By God I will. What! are ye not combined,

You, my false-blooded brother, demiprince,

And Bothwell, and the trustless fool Argyle,

With her to unmake me? I shall foil

you though, Yea, were all three made each a triple

man

With thrice your heart and wit.

Murray. You strike too high,

And shear but air in sunder: there's none yet

That wills you so much evil as yourself, Would you but think it. Turn your

wrath on me,

It cannot wound or fright out of its peace

A soul that answers not your hate, nor works

By night or light against you. Darnley. Swear me that,

And if a devil there be, I am rid of you Whom he will gripe at once, and hale to hell.

You took not word to Melville from my wife,

Of warning with rebuke for his past

To reconcile us, and with charge to be No more familiar with me for her sake:

You were not of her counsel to lie in At Stirling, whence she fled from sight

of me, Who following hither was again cast

And till our child was born in Edin-

burgh Might scarce have sight of her, and

may not now
When, scarce a month delivered, she
comes back

To take by sca and land her pleasure

Of hunt or sail among the firths and hills

In such fair fellowship as casts out mine.

It was not you that knew this, and approved:

I pray you, swear it.

Murray. You are lesser than a child, That, being as simple, yet by innocence

Exceeds you naturally. What cause have I

Or power to wrong you? what good thing of yours Should I desire to strip from you, and

wear,

What gold or grace to gird myself withal,

And stand up clad in thievish ornament

To take your place thrust out? Conspiracy

Should have some gain for warrant of itself,

With vantage of some purpose; none lays wait

To slay or steal save what may profit him:

So sit you safe enough.

Darnley. I shall not see her?

Murray. If you will be well counselled, no: her mood

Is hard and keener since your child was born,

And she, new-risen from childbed, hither came

To taste the savor and sweetness of the sea,
I think, with no mind you should follow

her; Nor am myself, howbeit you hold me

hers,
And of one counsel to put down your

hopes, More near her favor; one man's eye

alone Sees her face favorable, one only ear

Hears her speak soft; if he be friend of mine,

You know as I know.

Darnley. Why, ye are reconciled; I have heard what care she had to

appease both parts, When you before her face had braved

him, saying,

Ere he reft Maitland's forfeit land and state

Some score as honorable as he should die,

And she had cast herself across your wrath

With reconciling passion; ay, my lord,

Take note we are not so dull of ear or

But we hear word of you, and under-

The traitors that ye all are, all, to

The false heart and the lying lips that

The murderous meaning of your will, and hers

The first and worst. What! will ye have my life?

Is it my helpless blood that she would

To serve for christening-water to her

And for the font no gift of English gold

Though bright and hollow and void as English love,

But the strait coffin, the vile shell of death.

That hides and bears me graveward? but I live,

To save myself and to revenge I live, And will not die for all you.

Enter the QUEEN and BOTHWELL. Oueen. What is this

That makes such wrathful or such woful war

Even on our ears, and here? We bade you not

Come brawl before us like a groom, and break

Our breath of peace with cries of contumely. Here is not room enough for rioters'

threats To ring through and return; in Edin-

burgh You have leave to brawl and wail and swear and cry,

Feed where you list, and love; here I would rest,

With thus much leave yet by your

gracious grant,
That I may somewhile sit apart, and think

What man I have to husband. Darnley. I will go:

I would I had not come between your eves

Nor now nor ever.

Queen. Then they had never learnt

What makes or makes not man worth looking on. Darnley. Am I not worth your eye?

Queen. I pray, go back:

I would not say what you are worth or

Darnley. I am yet worth two bastards; and this man,

If he shall do me less than right, by heaven.

Shall wear the proof upon him.

Murray. Sir, your words Are as swords drawn of drunkards'

hands, which first

Feel their edge bite; me can they make not shrink,

You they may pierce, and slay your own good name, If any man be that gives ear to you.

Darnley. You will not fight with me? Oueen. What! in our face?

Hath fear gone after shame? Murray. Let him pass hence:

He hath said truth once; we shall not fight.

Oueen. I charge you

Make straight atonement; else, though shame be dead,

I will find means to raise up fear alive. Darnley. Nay, I spake hot and hastily: my lord,

You know I bear no bitter heart toward

I am more of quick tongue than of evil will.

Murray. Sir, so I hold you. Darnley. So you do but right.

Nor will I stay to chafe your majesty, That has all power to bid me to and fro

Who yet was called your lord once of the priest,

And am no lord, but servant. Exit.

Queen. Said you, once? Not once, but twice, he hath spoken

truth to-day. Yet sits it strange upon his lips.

Murray. I would He had come not hither, or you not bidden him back.

Queen. What! should he stay? Fair brother, wot you well,

I had rather touch in the dark a serpent's flesh,

And with its body and breath confound mine own,

Than with his breath and body. Never more,

By Mary Virgin, while these limbs are

And these my living lips, never will I Pollute myself with him; by kiss nor touch

Shall ever he defile me. Nay, too, see, (You have not seen) what privacies he hath

With what strange friends; here have I to my hand

Letters of his to Philip and the Pope, That they should know I am slacker toward the faith

Than Rome would have me, or Spain; he swears I am cold,

I have cast off care (God wot) to serve the Church,

And he it is, my lord, being strong in faith,

Expounds mine unfaith to them. Bothwell. Hath he sworn

To sleep for their sakes in a naked grave?

If this were blown among the popular folk,

Scant time there were to sew his shroud, I ween,

Ere earth were shed upon him.

Murray. Ay, but, sir,

They must not know it; it were not well they knew;

Nor shall it be put forth among them. Bothwell. No!

It shall not?

Murray. By my will it shall not be. Bothwell. His will! and shall not! Is it queen, or king,

That holds the rod of rule in Scotland here?

Madam, what says your sometime majesty

Of such a kingly will? since, for your own,

It has no power, it shall not fight with his, Shall not have way, nor shall not be at all.

Except it swim with his will.

Murray. This is naught.

Bothwell. Yea truly, naught shall be this will of yours, —

This potent will that shall not tread us down;

Yea, what you will or will not, all is naught,

naught, Naught as your name, or title to bear

rule
Within the realm possessed more
royally.

Murray. 'Tis not a score as big-voiced men as this

Shall make me weak with wagging of their tongues,

That I should loose what lies into my hand.

Madam, what faith I bear you and goodwill,

If that you know not, let the time and proof,

Not mine own lips, be witness: in this realm

I have some power to serve you, by no craft

Unjustly purchased nor by force of hand Won masterfully; and for God's love and yours

That which I may I will do to keep fair In the open eye of all men your good name

And power, which if that name be blown against

With windy whispers of ill-minded folk, Or such as see your marriage-bed lie cold,

And know not wherefore, dies out of your hand,

And is no more forever. Therefore is

I would not the worst cause of strife you have

Were opened to the people: for himself, You know if ever love between us were Since first I fell under your stroke of wrath

For his sole sake, whose match then made with you

I would betimes have broken, but being

Would not now see rent shamefully in twain

That men should speak you wrong.

Queen. You are honorable;

But yet the whole worst cause you know not of,—

That even his father Lennox writes me

Letters to put the charge thereof away, And clear himself of fellowship therein.

Assuring his own honesty, albeit

His word is worthless with his son my lord,

And his name held not as a father's

This letter will I lay before the lords, That they may see what manner of

cause he hath
To plead against us with what likeli-

hood,
When his own father shall forswear

his cause.
I am assured he hath set his lewd light

mind, — Out of what fear I know not, or what

shame, —
To flee forth of the kingdom, and take

ship For the islands westward of that south-

ern cape
Where the out-thrust heel of England
cleaves the sea;

But God knows how to live there, if by

Or what base mean of life: only thus much

In parley with the French ambassador He hath avowed, and wept to tell of wrongs

That, as he swears, have driven him down to this.

Murray. He is a fool, and vile: yet let not him

Be the more dangerous to you even for this,

That he is vile and foolish; there should be

Wise means to curb and chain the fool in him

Without the scandal of the full-mouthed world.

Queen. Such have I sought; and presently I think

To have him brought again in Edinburgh Before the lords in council, even those men

Who stood in arms against him with yourself
When first there grew debate upon our

When first there grew debate upon our match

(Which I could pray now with too tardy tongue

That God had given you force to break indeed),

And were of counsel with him afterward In David's bloodshed, and betrayed of him

Into mine hand again for perfect fear, Fear and false heart; even before these,

Fear and false heart; even before these,
I say,
Whose threefold memory of him so

must knit Their hearts to his, there shall he plead,

and say

If he have aught against me blame-

worthy, Or what he would: so shall he be dis-

played,
And we in the eyes of all men justified
That simply deal with him and honorably,

Not as by cunning or imperious hand, But plain as with an equal.

Bothwell. By my head,

Your counsel, madam, is more than man's poor wit.

Murray. It may do well: would all were well indeed!

I see no clearer way than this of yours Nor of more peaceful promise. I will

To bid my friends together of the lords Who will be counselled of me, and to show

Your purpose righteous: so I take my

[Exit

Queen. Is not that light red oversea? Bothwell. Blood-red.

Queen. The wind has fallen: but there the clouds come up.

We shall not sail to-day.

Bothwell. No: here will be No woman's weather.

Queen. Yet I had in mind

Either to sail or drive the deer to-day.

That I should care to house and hide

my head.

I never loved the windless weather, nor The dead face of the water in the sun: I had rather the live wave leapt under me, And fits of foam struck light on the dark air,

And the sea's kiss were keen upon my

And bold as love's and bitter; then my soul Is a wave too that springs against the

light, And beats and bursts with one great

strain of joy As the sea breaking. You said well;

this light

Is like shed blood spilt here by drops and there.

That overflows the red brims of the cloud.

And stains the moving water: yet the waves

Pass, and the spilt light of the broken

Rests not upon them but a minute's space;

No longer should a deed, methinks, once done,

Endure upon the life of memory To stain the days thereafter with re-

morse, And mar the better seasons.

Bothwell. So think I.

Oueen, If I were man, I would be man like you.

Bothwell. What then?

Queen. And, being so loved as you of

I would make use of love, and in good

I'ut the scythe to it, and reap; it should not rot

As corn ungarnered, it should bring forth bread

And fruit of life to strengthen me: but, mark,

Who would eat bread must earn bread: would you be king?

Bothwell. Nay, but servant ever to my queen.

Queen. Let us go forth; the evening will be fair.

SCENE VII. - EDINBURGH: THE PAR-LIAMENT-HOUSE.

The QUEEN seated in state; near her Du CROC and MURRAY; DARNLEY in front, as at his arraignment; on the one side the Lords of the Congregation; on the other those of the Queen's party, BOTHWELL, HUNTLEY, CAITH-NESS, ATHOL, and the ARCHBISHOP of ST. ANDREW'S.

Queen. My lords, ye hear by his own word of hand

How fair and loyally our father writes. To purge his name that had indeed no soil

Of any blame to us-ward; though he

No power upon our wedded lord his

To heal his heart's disease of discon-

Which, for myself, before God's face and yours

I do protest I know not what thing done

Hath in my lord begotten or brought forth,

Nor of what ill he should complain in

Nay, here in very faith and humbleness I turn me to him, and with clasped

hands beseech That he would speak even all his mind

of me, In what thing ever I have given my

lord offence, And if before him I stand blameworthy

Would lay my blame for burden on my head

In this high presence; which to bear shall be

At once for penance and instruction to Who know not yet my lightest fault by

name. Ochiltree. So would we all be certi-

fied of you,

Sir, that your cause may stand forth visibly,

And men take cognizance of it who see

Nor root nor fruit now of your discontent;

We pray you, then, make answer to the queen.

Du Croc. My lord, you have held me for a friend, and laid A friend's trust on me; for that honor's

sake
For which I am bounden to you, give

me now

But leave to entreat you in all faith of heart Dishonor not yourself nor this great

queen
By speech or silence with a show of

shame;

Let it be seen shame hath no portion here,

But honor only and reconciled remorse
That pours its bitter balm into the
wound

Of love somewhile divided from itself, And makes it whole: I pray you, be it so now,

Queen. An honorable petition, my good lord.

And one that comes reverberate from my heart.

Darnley. I will not stand the question. Are ye set

To bait me like a bondslave? Sirs, I

There is no worthier man of you than I, Whom ye would chide and bait and mock: howbeit,

Ye shall not wring out of my smitten lips,

As from a child's ye scourge till he speak truth,

One word I would not; rather being thus used

I will go forth the free man that I came, No nobler, but as noble. For your grace,

I have stood too near you now to fall behind,

And stand far back with vassal hat plucked off

To bow at bidding; therefore with free soul

For a long time I take farewell and go, Commending you to God; and if, as seems. I was or naught or grievous in your eye,

It shall not take offence this many a day

At this that here offends it. So I have done:

Enough said is said well.

Bothwell (aside to the Queen). I never

Such heart yet in the fool. Madam, speak now;

I wot he hath made a beard or two of them

Nod favorably.

Queen. What should I say? not I.

Bothwell. Speak to the ambassador;
bid him take heed

This feather fly not shipward, and be blown

Out of our hand; speak to him. Queen. Have no such fear.

He will not fly past arm's length; the French lord

Will hold him safe unbidden. Look, they talk.

Bothwell. And yet I would he had spoken not so high.

I did not think but he would bend, and mourn

Like a boy beaten.

Queen. With what sorrow of heart, My lords, we have heard such strange and harsh reply

To our good words and meaning, none of you

But must be as ourself to know it well But since nor kindliness nor humble speech

Nor honest heart of love can so prevail Against the soul of such inveteracy,

But wilful mind will make itself more hard

Than modesty and womanhood are soft Or gentleness can speak it fair, we have not

One other tear to weep thereon for shame.

So without answer, yea, no word vouchsafed,

As all ye witness, no complaint, no cause,

No reason shown, but all put off in wrath, -

I would not say, ourself in you, my lords,

Mocked with defiance, — it were but a

To hold our session further. Thus in grief

Will we fare hence, and take of you farewell,

Being southward bounden, as ye know, to hear

At Jedburgh what complaint of wrong there is

Between our own folk and the bordering men,

Whose wardens of the English side have wrought us

Fresh wrong but late; and our good warden here

Shall go before us to prepare our way.

## Scene VIII. - Hermitage Castle.

The QUEEN and BOTHWELL.

Bothwell. I did not think you could have rid so fast.

Queen. There is no love in you to lift your heart,

Nor heart to lift the fleshly weight, and bear

Forward: I struck my love even as a spur
Into the tired side of my horse, and

made it Leap like a flame that eats up all its way

Leap like a flame that eats up all its way Till I were here.

Fothwell. Why came you not before? Queen. What! am I now too slow? Bothwell. Ay, though you rode

Beyond the sun's speed, yea, the race of time

That runs down all men born. Forgive it me

That I was wroth and weary for your love,

Here lying alone, out of your eyes; I could not

But chafe and curse, sending my spirit forth

From this maimed flesh yet halting with its wound

To move about you like a thought, and bring me

Word of your works and ways.

Queen. I could not come.

Bothwell. Was there so much work worthier to be done

Than this, to give love and to take again

Thus? but for my part, of all things in the world

I hold this best, to love you; and I think

God never made your like for man to love.

Queen. You are my soldier; but these silk-soft words

Become your lips as well as mine, when love

Rekindles them; how good it is to have A man to love you! here is man indeed,

Not fool or boy, to make love's face ashamed,

To abash love's heart, and turn to bitterness

The sweet blood-current in it. O my fair lord!

How fairer is this warrior face, and eyes

With the iron light of battle in them left

As the after-fire of sunset left in heaven When the sun sinks, than any fool's face made

Of smiles and courtly color! Now I feel

As I were man too, and had part myself In your great strength; being one with you as I,

How should not I be strong? It is your deed,

By grace of you and influence, sir, it is That I fear nothing; how should I lift up

Mine eyes to your eyes, O my light o' the war,

And dare be fearful? yours but looked upon,

Though mine were timorous as a dove's affrayed,

For very shame would give them heart, and fire

and fire
To meet the eyes of danger. What

To have your love, and love you, and yet be

No more than women are whose name is fear

And their hearts bloodless, — I, who am part of you,

am part of you,
That have your love for heart's blood?
Shall I think

The blood you gave me fighting for my sake

Has entered in my veins, and grown in

To fill me with you? O my lord, my king,

Love me! I think you cannot love me

That have done naught nor borne for love of you;

But by the eye's light of all-judging God.

That if I lie shall burn my soul in hell, There is not in this fierce world any thing,

Scorn, agony, stripes, bonds, fears, woes, deep shame,

Kingdomless ruin, but with open hands, With joyous bosom open as to love,

Yea, with soul thankful for its great delight

And life on fire with joy, for this love's sake

I would embrace and take it to my heart.

Bothwell. Why, there should need not this to love you well;
What should you have to bear for me,

my queen, Or how should I more love you? Nay,

sweet, peace, Let not your passion break you; your

breast burns, Your very lips taste bitter with your

· tears.

Queen. It is because — O God that pities us! —

I may not always lie thus, may not kneel,

Cling round your hands and feet, or with shut eyes

Wait till your lips be fast upon my face, And laugh with very love intolerable As I laugh now. Look, now I do not weep,

I am not sad nor angered against heaven That ever he divides us; I am glad That yet I have mine hour. Sweet, do not speak,

Nor do not kiss me; let mine eyes but rest

In the love's light of yours, and for a space

My heart lie still, late drunken with love's wine,

And feel the fierce fumes lessen and go

And leave it healed. Oh! I have bled for you

The nearest inward blood that is my

life

Drop by drop inly till my swooning

Drop by drop inly, till my swooning heart

Made my face pale. I should look green and wan

If by heart's sickness and blood-wasting pain

The face be changed indeed; for all

The face be changed indeed; for all these days
Your wound bled in me, and your face

far off

Was as a moving fire before mine eyes That might not come to see you; I was

dead, And yet had breath enough, speech,

hearing, sight, To feel them strange and insupport-

I know now how men live without a heart.

Does your wound pain you?

Bothwell. What! I have a wound? Queen. How should one love enough, though she gave all,

Who had your like to love? I pray you tell me,

How did you fight?

Bothwell. Why, what were this to tell?

I caught this reiver, by some chance of God,

That put his death into mine hand, alone,

And charged him; foot to foot we fought some space,

And he fought well; a gallant knave, God wot,

And worth a sword for better soldier's work

Than these thieves' brawls. I would have given him life
To ride among mine own men here and

serve,
But he would not: so being sore burt i

But he would not: so being sore hurt i' the thigh

I pushed upon him suddenly, and clove His crown through to the chin.

Queen. I will not have you

Henceforth for warden of these borders, sir;

We have hands enow for that and heads to cleave

That but their wives will weep for.

Bothwell. Have no fear.

This hour had healed me of more grievous wounds:

When it shall please you sign me to your side,

Think I am with you.

Queen. I must ride - woe's me!

The hour is out. Be not long from me, love;

And till you come, I swear by your own head

I will not see the thing that was my lord,

Though he came in to Jedburgh. I had thought

To have spoken of him, but my lips were loath

To mar with harsh intrusion of his name

The least of all our kisses. Let him be:

We shall have time. How fair this castle stands!

These hills are greener, and that singing stream

Sings sweeter, and the fields are brighter faced,

Than I have seen or heard; and these good walls

That keep the line of kingdom, all my life

I shall have mind of them to love them well.

Nay, yet I must to horse.

Bothwell. Ay must you, sweet; If you will ride thus fifty mile a day, But for your face you should be ma

But for your face you should be man indeed.

Queen. But for my face?

Bothwell. If you will make me mad— Queen. I dare not dwell with madmen; sir, farewell.

Bothwell. But for your love, and for its cruelty,

I would have said, you should be man. Queen. Alas!

But for my love? nay, now you speak but truth;

For I well knew there was no love in man.

But we grow idle in this our laboring time.

When we have wrought through all the heat o' the day,

We may play then unblamed, and fear no hand

To push us each from other: now fare well.

Scene IX. — The Queen's Lodging at Jedburgh.

The three MARIES.

Mary Carmichael. What, will she die? how says this doctor now? Mary Seyton. He thinks by chafing

of her bloodless limbs
To quicken the numbed life to sense

again
That is as death now in her veins; bu'

surely
I think the very spirit and sustenance

That keeps the life up current in the blood

Hath left her as an empty house, for death,

Entering, to take and hold it. Mary Beaton. I say, no;

She will not die of chance or weariness:

This fever caught of riding and hot haste

Being once burnt out, as else naught ails her, will not

Leave her strength tainted: she is manly made,

And good of heart; and even by this her brain,

We see, begins to settle; she will live.

Mary Carmichael. Pray God she
may, and no time worse than this

Come through her death on us and all her land

Left lordless for men's swords to carve and share, —

Pray God she die not.

Mary Beaton. From my heart, amen! God knows and you if I would have her die.

Mary Seyton. Would you give up your loving life for hers?

Mary Beaton. I shall not die before her; nor, I think,

Live long when she shall live not. Mary Seyton. A strange faith:

Who put this confidence in you? or is it But love that so assures you to keep life

While she shall keep, and lose when she shall lose

For very love's sake?

Mary Beaton. This I cannot tell,

Whence I do know it; but that I know it I know,

And by no casual or conjectural proof
Not yet by test of reason; but I know it
Even as I know I breathe, see, hear,
feed, speak,

And am not dead and senseless of the

sun

That yet I look on: so assuredly I know I shall not die till she be dead. Look, she is risen.

Enter the QUEEN, supported by attendants.

Queen. What word was in your lips?
That I must die?

Mary Seyton. Heaven hath not such hard heart.

Queen. I think I shall not, surely, by

God's grace;
Yet no man knows of God when he will bring

His hour upon him. I am sick and weak,

And yet unsure if I be whole of mind. I think I have been estranged from my right wits

These some days back; I know not.
Prithee tell me,

Have I not slept? I know you, who you are;

You were about me thus in our first days,

When days and nights were rose-leaves that fell off Without a wind or taint of chafing air, But passed with perfume from us, and their death

Had on it still the tender dew of birth. We were so near the sweet warm wells of life,

We lay and laughed in bosom of the dawn,

And knew not if the noon had heat to burn

Or the evening rain to smite us; being grown tall,

Our heads were raised more near the fires of heaven

And bitter strength of storms; then we were glad,

Ay, glad and good. Is there yet one of you

Keeps in her mind what hovers now in mine, —

That sweet strait span of islanded green ground

Where we played once, and set us flowers that died

Before even our delight in them was dead?

Now we are old, delights are first to die

Before the things that breed them.

Mary Seyton (aside). She roams yet.

Mary Beaton. I do remember. Queen. Yea, I knew it; one day We wrangled for a rose' sake, and fell

With tears and words protesting each 'twas she,

She 'twas that set it; and for very wrath I plucked up my French lilies, and set foot

On their gold heads, because you had chafed me, saying

Those were her flowers who should be queen in France,

And leave you, being no queen, your Scottish rose

With simpler leaves ungilt and inno

That smelt of homelier air; and I mine

I rent the rose out of your hand, and

Upon the river's running; and a thorn Pierced through mine own hand, and wept not then, But laughed for anger at you, and glad heart

To have made you weep, being worsted. What light things

Come back to the light brain that sickness shakes.

And makes the heaviest thought that it can hold

No heavier than a leaf, or gossamer That seems to link two leaves a minute.

then

A breath unlinks them; so my thoughts are, - nay,

And should not so: it may be I shall

And as a fool I would not pass away With babbling lips unpurged and graceless heart

Unreconciled to mercy. Let me see That holy lord I bade be not far

While I lay sick — I have not here his

My head is tired, yet have I strength at heart To say one word shall make me friends

with God. Commending to him in the hour of un-

ripe death The spirit so rent untimely from its

house. And, ere the natural night lay hold

on it, Darkly divided from the light of life.

Pray him come to me. Mary Beaton. Is it my lord of Ross, The queen would see? my lord is at

her hand. Enter the BISHOP OF ROSS. Queen. Most reverend father, my soul's friend, you see

How little queenlike I sit here at wait Till God lay hand on me for life or death.

With pain for that gold garland of my head

Men call a crown, and for my body's robe

Am girt with mortal sickness: I would

Before I set my face to look on death, Mine eyes against his eyes, make straight the way

My soul must travel with this flesh put

At the dark door; I pray you for God's grace

Give me that holy help that is in you

To lighten my last passage out of sight. For this world's works, I have done with them this day,

With mine own lips while yet their breath was warm

Commending to my lords the natural charge

Of their born king, and by my brother's mouth

To the English queen the wardship of her heir,

And by the ambassador's of France again

To his good mistress and my brother king

The care of mine unmothered child. who has

No better friends bequeathable than these;

And for this land have I besought them all, —

Who may beseech of no man aught again, -

That here may no man for his faith be wronged

Whose faith is one with mine that all my life

I have kept, and fear not in it now to die.

Bishop of Ross. Madam, what comfort God hath given his priests

To give again, what stay of spirit and strength

May through their mean stablish the souls of men

To live or die unvexed of life or death. Unwounded of the fear and fang of hell,

Doubt not to have; seeing though no man be good,

But one is good, even God, yet in his

The man that keeps faith sealed upon

his soul Shall through the blood-shedding of Christ be clean.

And in this time of cursing and flawed faith

Have you kept faith unflawed, and on your head

The immediate blessing of the spouse of God.

Have no fear therefore but your sins

Or stains and shadows such as all men

In this world's passage, from the touch of time.

Shall fall from off you as a vesture changed,

And leave your soul for whiteness as a child's.

Queen. I would have absolution ere I

But of what sins I have not strength to sav

Nor hardly to remember. I do think I have done God some service, holding

Faith, and his Church's fear; and have loved well

His name and burden set on me to

To bear his part in the eye of this thwart world,

And witness of his cross; yet know myself

To be but as a servant without grace Save of his lord's love's gift; I have sinned in pride,

Perchance, to be his servant first, and fight,

In face of all men's hate and might, alone.

Here sitting single-sceptred, and com-

For all its many-mouthed inveteracy The world with bit and bridle like a beast

Brought back to serve him, and bowed down to me,

Whose hand should take and hale it by the mane,

And bend its head to worship as I bade, I, first among his faithful; so I said, And foolishly; for I was high of heart;

And now, behold, I am in God's sight and man's

Nothing; but though I have not so much grace

I have held mine own faith fast, and with my lips

Have borne him witness if my heart were whole.

Bishop of Ross. Therefore shall he forget not in your hour,

Nor for his child reject you; and shall

The weight and color of your sins on earth

More white and light than wool may be or snow.

Queen. Yea, so my trust is of him; though as now

Scarce having in me breath or spirit of speech

I make not long confession, and my words

Through faintness of my flesh lack form; yet, pray you,

Think it but sickness and my body's

That comes between me and my will, who fain

Would have your eye look on my naked soul,

And read what writing there should be washed out

With mine own heart's tears, and with God's dear blood,

Who sees me for his penitent; for surely My sins of wrath and of light-minded-

And waste of wanton will and wander-

ing eyes, Call on me with dumb tongues for

penitence; Which I beseech you let not God reject

For lack of words that I lack strength to say.

For here, as I repent and put from me, In perfect hope of pardon, all ill thoughts,

So I remit all faults against me done, Forgive all evil toward me of all men,

Deed or device to hurt me; yea, I would not

There were one heart unreconciled with

When mine is cold; I will not take death's hand

To bind again this people fast to God, With any soil of hate or wrath or wrong

About me, but being friends with this past world

Pass from it in the general peace of love.

Mary Beaton. Here is some message from the world of friends,

Brought to your brother: shall my lord come in?

Queen. What lord? ye have no lord of any man

While I am lady of all you. Who is this?

Message? what message? whence? Enter Murray.

Murray. From Edinburgh

Your husband new alighted in sharp speed

Craves leave of access to your majesty.

Queen. By heaven, I had rather death
had leave than he.

What comes he for? to vex me quick

or dead

With his lewd eyes and sodden sidelong face

That I may die again with loathing of him?

By God, as God shall look upon my soul,

I will not see him. Bid him away, and

Far off as Edinburgh may hold him hence

Among his fellows of the herded swine That not for need but love he wallows with

To expend his patrimony of breath and blood

In the dear service of dishonoring days.

Murray. Let him but bide the night here.

Queen. Not an hour;

Not while his horse may breathe. I will not see him.

Murray. Nay, for the world's sake, and lest worse be said;

Let him sleep here, and come not in your sight.

Oueen. Unless by some mean I be

Queen. Unless by some mean I be freed of him,

I have no pleasure upon earth to live.

I will put hand to it first myself. My lord,

See how this ill man's coming shakes my soul,

And stains its thoughts with passionate earth again

That were as holy water, white and sweet,

For my rechristening; I could weep with wrath

To find between my very prayer and God

His face thrust like a shameful thought in sleep.

I cannot pray nor fix myself on heaven But he must loose my hole, break up my trust,

Unbind my settled senses, and pluck down

My builded house of hope. Would he were dead

That puts my soul out of its peace with God!

Comfort me, father; let him not have way;

Keep my soul for me safe, and full of heaven

As it was late. — See that you rid him hence,

I charge you, sir, with morning.

Murray. Yea, I shall;

'Twere best he saw you not.

Queen. I think so. Hark!

Who is there lighted after him?

heard —
Nay, he is sick yet, wounded; yet I
heard —

Pray God he be not risen too soon, to ride

With his wound's danger for r y sickness' sake.

Mary Beaton. It is my lord the warden.

Queen. What! I knew it, -

So soon so far, and with such speed!

Had queen so ill befrien ted of her own So fast a friend and loving. I will see him;

I am stronger than I was. Give me your hands;

I can stand upright surely. Come you

And help to attire me like a living queen;

These are as grave-clothes. One go bring me word
How he looks now, — if weak or well

indeed,
If stout of cheer or tired. Say, for his

coming
And care unbidden of me, I thank him

not If he have done his own wound hurt

thereby.

I will but rest, and see him: bring me in. [Exeunt.

#### SCENE X. - CRAIGMILLAR.

The QUEEN, MURRAY, BOTHWELL, MAITLAND, HUNTLEY, and ARGYLE. Queen. If it must be, or all without it break.

I am content to have Lord Morton

home;
Nay, all of them ye will, save two I
keep

To be the food of justice and my wrath,

Now hunger-starven; his red hand who

set To my child-burdened breast the iron

death, And the uncle of my caitiff; they shall

bleed,
As Ruthven should, but for death's

hastier hand
That plucked him up before me: for
his son,

Let him come back too.

Maitland. It is nobly judged,

And shall content the lords and land alike

With such good counsel and such fair consent

To see your highness moved to rid yourself

Of their disease and yours, with all men's will

Purged from you by the readiest mean we may.

Queen. Ay, by divorce: I have then

your tongues to that, — Yours, both my friends now that were

ill friends once,

But handfast here in common faith to me

And equal-hearted; and my brother's voice,

Joined with these good lords present: but you said,

Was it not you said, sir, that by divorce, Though leave were given of them that might withhold,

And the priest's word that bound unbound us, yet

Some soil might fall from lips of evil

On our son's birth-name?

Maitland. Yea, from ill men's mouths And all that hate you such rebuke might fall,

Which were foul shame to suffer and be dumb,

Though made by your divorce unanswerable.

Queen. In sooth, I thought so; and howbeit yourself,

My lord of Bothwell, by the judgment given

That loosed your mother's from your father's hand

Stood undespoiled in fair inheritance, It may be where the cast is of a crown,

And such a crown as in contention shakes

Two several-storied kingdoms, even the chance

Should stand not questionable, and friend nor foe

Have word to throw against it. *Maitland*. So I said.

Bothwell. Yet must the queen be freed; and for the fear

Lest England for his sake be moved, I know not

What hold it has upon us, who but

Saw what good heart and loyal will they bear

To the right heirship of your majesty

Who bide on our south border, when their guns

From Berwick hailed you passing hither, and made

The loud-mouthed crags cry to their batteries back,

And tell the sundering Tweed and all green hills,

lands

And all the clamorous concourse of the sea,

sea,
The name that had the lordship of both

In heritage to bind them fast in one.

There heart and tongue outspake of the true north

That for his caitiff sake should not be moved

Nor alter from its faith though he were cast,

With haltered throat or millstone round his neck,

From a queen's bed into the naked sea.

Maitland. Madam, we are here for service of your grace,

Chief of your council and nobility:

We shall find mean whereby without wrong done

To your son's title, you shall well be

Of your ill-minded husband; and albeit My lord of Murray present here be one As scrupulous of his faith a Protestant As is your grace a Papist, he will look As through his fingers on the work we do.

And say no word, I am well assured, of all

His eye may wink on.

Queen. Nay, I cannot tell;

I would not have mine honor touched,

My peace with hurt of conscience; being so wise

As silence proves you or as speech proclaims,

Ye shall do well to let this be; perchance The good ye mean me being untimely done

Might turn to my displeasure, and your hands

Leave me more hurt than holpen. Murray. You say well;

For none but honorable and lawful ends Have I desired this council, to procure Your just and honest freedom, and repeal

The banished Morton, whose advice thereto

Shall not be fruitless; for no further aim To no strange mean have I put hand. Farewell. [Exit.

Argyle. He will not know of us enough to thwart;

And so not least may serve us; but if here

These hands whose help would hurt you not be set

To such a bond as may put forth our cause.

And bind us to sustain it with one soul, Shall they more hurt than help you? Queen. Nay, ye are wise;

I know not; but I think your helpful hands

Could not be set but to my service.

Huntley. Then

Should we set down what reason of resolve

We have to make it manifest and sure That this young fool and tyrant by our will

Shall bear no rule among us, and thereto

For divers causes shall he be put forth One way or other, and what man soe'er Shall take this deed in hand, or do it, all we

Shall as our own and general act of all Defend and fortify it.

Queen. Must all set hands
To one same bond for warrant?

Bothwell. Who should fail? Not we that shall devise it, nor Balfour, My kinsman here and friend.

*Queen.* Must you sign too?

Bothwell. How must I not? am I not fit to serve

As being or coward or faithless or a fool,

Or all or any? or what misdoubt of

yours
Should wash my writing out or blur my

name?

What faith a faithful servant of his hands

May freely challenge of the king they serve,

So much I challenge of your majesty.

Queen. Nay, my fair lord, but for your
known faith's sake

And constant service the less need it

To have your hand here on our side lest men

Should lay the deed but on mine ancient friends,

Whose names not all men love yet for

my sake,

And call it but our privy plot and hate, Which is the judgment of all wisest lords

And equal sentence of the general land.

Maitland. So we that were not counted with your friends

Should bear the whole deed and its danger up, —

We whom you have loved not, madam,

for the stand

We made against the perilous loves and hates

That loosened half your people's love from you.

Yet must we have his hand too.

Bothwell. Ay, and shall.

I wear no gloves when hands are bared

to strike.

Qneen. Be it as you will; I am nothing in your count;

So be it; my counsel shall not cumber you.

Do all ye list.

Maitland. And all that shall be done Will be the more strength to your majesty,

And comfort to your cause: which now we go

With all our help to hearten. *Queen*. Go, and thrive.

[Exeunt MAITLAND, HUNTLEY, and ARGYLE

I would we had no need of such men's tongues.

Bothwell. He has the wisest name on all their side:

And by the tether that holds fast his faith

We lead their lesser wits what way we will.

Sharp-spirited is he surely, deep of soul, Cunning and fearless; one that gives, men say,

Small heed or honor to their faiths or fears

And breath of holy custom; undistraught

By doubt of God's hand paddling in our clay

Or dream of God's eye slanted on our sin;

As one that holds more worthily of God,

- Or would not hold at all - whate'er he be.

Than of a sidelong scrupulous overseer That pries askance upon our piteous lives

To judge of this and this, how ill or well,

And mark souls white or black with coal or chalk

For crowning or for burning, palms or fires;

One therefore that through all shut ways of life

Lets his soul range, even like the allwinnowing wind,

And ply her craft in all life's businesses Not like a blind man burdened; sure of hand

And great of counsel, like an under fire That works in the earth and makes its breach by night,

And leaps a league's length at the first stride forth

Of its free foot, blackening the face of men;

So strong and keen and secret is his soul.

Queen. So he keep trust, I care not if his creed

Be faced or lined with craft and atheism,

His soul be close or open; but what bond

Shall bind him ours so sure that fraud nor force

May serve against us more?

Bothwell. Doubt me not that;

By hilt, not edge, we hold him as a sword

That in our hand shall bend not till we break,

If we would break it when our work is

done.

Queen. Have we the strength? I doubt not of this hand,

That holds my heart, if it be strong or no,

More than I doubt of the eyes that light mine eyes,

The lips that my lips breathe by, — O my life,

More than I doubt of mine own bitter love,

More than of death's no power to sunder us,

Of his no force to quench me who am fire, —

Fire for your sake, that would put all these out

To shine and lighten in your sight alone For warmth and comfort, being to all eyes beside

Or fear or ruin more fleet of foot than

tear

I would I had on breast or hand or brow In crown or clasp the whole gold

wrought of the earth,

In one keen jewel the store of all the sea,

That I might throw down at your hand or foot

Sea, land, and all that in them is of price,

Or in the strong wine of my piercing love

Melt the sole pearl of the earth, and drink dissolved

The cost of all the world's worth. Bothwell. Yea, my queen?

Have then no fear what man shall deem or do;

For by this fire and light of you I swear,—

That is my sunlight and my fire of day,—

We shall not walk as they that walk by night Toward our great goal uncertainly, nor

swerve
Till we strike foot against it. Kiss me

now,
And bid me too speed on my way with

them

To bring back all their hands here to the bond

Set fast as mine, or as your heart is fast Set on his death whose life lies nigh burnt out,

Half brand, half ash already, in the heat Of that bright wrath which makes as red as flame Your fearful and sweet splendor; nay, by heaven,

It flushes all the light about your face With seven-times-kindled color of pure fire,

And burns mine eyes beholding, as your lips

And quick breath burn me kissing. My sweet fear,

Had you not been the sweetest, even to me

You must have been the fearfullest thing alive.

Queen. For love is so, and I am very love,

And no more queen or woman; have no heart,

No head, no spirit or sense at all of life, Save as of love that lives and that is I, I that was woman, and bore rule alone Upon myself; who am all dis-kingdomed now,

Made twice a slave, — mine own soul's thrall, and yours

Who wield the heart that wields me at your will.

I can but do as wills the spirit in me
Which is your spirit's servant. Ah,
my lord,—

My one lord every way, my poor heart's blood,

Breath of my lips and eyesight of mine eyes, —

How did I live the life that loved you not?
What were those days wherein I walked

apart, And went my way, and did my will

alone,

And thought and wrought without you in the world?

Then I did evil and folly: the more

I purge me now, and perfect my desire, Which is to be no more your lover, no, But even yourself, yea more than body and soul,

One and not twain, one utter life, one fire,

One will, one doom, one deed, one spirit, one God;

For we twain grown and molten each

Surely shall be as God is and no man. Bothwell. God speed us, then, till we grow up to God!

Me first, who first shall clear our way to

climb

By carving one weed's earthly coil away That cumbers our straight growing: pray for me!

I will have all their hands to it in an

hour.

Scene XI. — Courtyard of a Host-ELRY AT WHITTINGHAM.

BOTHWELL and MORTON. Morton. Fled in pure fear of me? well, he knows best.

Towards Glasgow, said you? Bothwell. Soon as came the word

You were brought home with welcome of the queen, He spurs from Stirling with all heat of

speed, —

Even from her arms new-reconciled and That favorably had received him;

leaves the feast Half made, and his unchristened yean-

ling there Not yet signed God's, and dewy from the font

Long waited for, till the English golden

Was grown too strait to hold and hallow him, -

Flies from all sight and cheer of festal

And on the way being smitten sick with fear

Cries out of poison working in his flesh Blue-spotted as with ulcerous pestilence,

Weeps himself dead, and wails himself alive,

As now he lies, but bedrid; and has lain

This Christmas through, while the queen held her feast

At Drummond Castle.

Morton. Yea, I heard so; and you At Tullibardine likewise, or men lie, Kept the feast high beside her. Well, my lord,

Now have you time and room to say for each

What ye would have of me, the queen and you,

Who are hand and tongue at once of her design.

Here am I newly lighted, hot from horse,

But fresh come forth of exile and ill days

To do you service: let me have her hand

For warrant of what dangerous work she will.

And mine is armed to do it; but till I have,

Expect of me, who have seen times strange as this,

Nothing.

Bothwell. I have her warrant in my

By me she speaks you safe in serving

Morton. Let that secure yourself: I must have proofs.

Bothwell. You shall have all, and written; but your hand

Must be in this with ours.

Morton. I have cause enough,

Good reason and good will to see it performed,

But will not strike through mine own side at him:

Make your mind sure of that.

Bothwell. Well, you shall have it; Myself will fetch your warrant from her hand

That from my mouth assures you not; and then -

Morton. Then shall my hand make answer to her own. [Exeunt.

# SCENE XII. - CALLANDER.

The QUEEN and LADY RERES. Queen. I do not feel as at past partings: then

My heart was sick and bitter, and mine

Saw not beyond the grievous hour at hand;

Now when of all time I should be most sad,

Being parted at love's highest of height from love,

And bound to meet love's poison and my plague,

My life's live curse yet married to my life,

Yet am I light and fuller of sweet hope Than even sweet memory fills me.

Lady Reres. It is well

When dawn discomforts not the whole sweet night.

Queen. There be stars sure that die

not of the day,

Or in this hoariest hour of dusk and dew How should my heart be warm with last night's fire?

Enter BOTHWELL.
What! risen so soon, my lord?
Bothwell. What! not yet forth?

That was the question laughing on your lips,

And this my plea to kill the question with.

[Kissing her.]

I must ride now. There waits a mes-

From our wed lord in Glasgow.

Queen. Ay? would God He had slipt his saddle and borne his charge to hell!

Must we part here? I ask but what I know,

Only to have a breath more of your mouth.

A smile more of your eye, turn of your head,

Before you kiss and leave me. Why should love,

That can change life, seat and disseat the soul In heaven or hurl it hellward, break and

build, Root and unroot the very springs o'

the heart, Have not the force to pluck but twelve

hours back,
And twice consume and twice consum-

mate life,
Twice crowned and twice confounded?

I would give All but love's self, all hope and heat of

But to have over this scant space again, Since yesterday saw sunset.

Bothwell. You shall win

A better prayer than this; for one poor hour

Caught from the gripe of all goodgrudging time,

An hundred-fold in long-lived happiness,

Secure and scatheless of all change or fear.

Queen. Yet this joy waited on by fear and doubt,

Plucked casually, a flower of accident, On the rough lip and edge of danger's breach,

How sweeter is it than the rose to smell

We gather from our garden with gloved hand, And find nor thorn nor perfume! You

must go,
And I part hence; yet all through life

and death

I shall have mind of this most gracious

I shall have mind of this most gracious place,

Poor palace of all pleasure, where I found

Brief harborage in long travel of my life.

Now take farewell of me.

Bothwell. Fair lips, farewell,

And love me till we kiss again and sleep. [Exit.

Queen. So may my last sleep kiss me at your lips,

And find me full of you as heaven of light
When my time comes of slumber. —

Bid this man
Come in that waits: he shall be

Come in that waits: he shall bear word of me

Before I stand in his lord's sight again.

Enter Crawford.

What message from our lord your

master, sir?

Crawford Madam with all his heart

Crawford. Madam, with all his heart my lord commends

His heart's excuses to your majesty

For the great grief and doubt wherein it stands

Of your unstanched displeasure; of which fear

He lies soul-sick, and sends that heart by me To crave its pardon of you, and for grace

From your dread lips some comfortable word

That may assure him who now lives in pain

Through the evil news he hears from all winds blown,

In all mouths open; whence as one distraught,

And knowing not how to bear himself secure

Or dare put forth to meet you, for the words

He hears you have said, though fain, I know, to come

And clear himself of aught that you suspect

By present inquisition, — this I know, Though now he laid no charge on me to say, —

He hath writ you word already of his grief,

And finds no answer but of bitter sound, Nor any light of pity from your face, Nor breath of healing; wherefore on

my knees He kneels before you to require his

doom.
Queen. I have no remedy for fear;

there grows

No herb of help to heal a coward
heart.

Fears were not rank were faults not rank in him.

Crawford. It is no caitiff doubt that pleads with you,
No rootless dread sprung of a craven

mood
That bows him down before your high-

ness' foot
To take the sovereign sentence of your

And bide and bear its judgment given as God's:

He knows, he says, by proof and speech of men

What cause he has what friends of yours to fear.

Queen. What! must I ride alone to comfort him?

Tell him he may sleep sure, then, though I come:

Lord Bothwell is bound back to Edinburgh;

There is no man to affright him in my train

But grooms and lackeys; and, for all I hear,

He never feared my women. Crawford. Please it you,

My master doth but wish all hearts of men

Were on their faces written with their faith.

Queen. Hath he no more than this, our lord, to say?

Then let him hold his peace; and bear him word

That of our grace we come to cherish him

With not a man's face to procure his dread.

Tell him so much, and bid him keep good heart,

If heart he have, even for my sake, who swear

He shall not long live in this fear of me.

Scene XIII. — Darnley's Lodging in Glasgow.

DARNLEY on a couch, as sick; CRAW-FORD in attendance.

Darnley. She is come in, then? Crawford. Presently she comes.

Darnley. You found her yet more sharp of eye than tongue? Crawford. Ay.

Darnley. Would I had but strength to bring myself

Forth of this land where none will pity me, —

No, not the least of all you, though I

Who comes with her? what household? I would speak

With Joachim her French fellow there, to know

to know
Why she should come,—you cannot

show me, — ay,
And if for good; and if they come with
her, —

Her outland folk and Bothwell's, - or, at least,

If she have mind yet to send off or (Without.) Make way there for the

Joseph, her dead knave's brother. Are you sure

Himself shall come not? wherefore, being come in,

Should she not lodge beside me? Nay,

More than she wots of, and have spies that see

What counsels breed among the crew of them.

What talk was that of marriage that should be

Between her fiddler and no maid of hers,

To what fair end? Would God I might take ship!

I would make speed for England; there at least

They durst not lay their nets about my

Here every wind that blows hath smells of blood.

I am lost and doomed; lost, lost! Crawford. Have better thoughts.

Take hope to you, and cheer. Darnley. Ay, ay, much cheer!

Ye are all in one to abuse me, snare and slay, -

Ye are all one heart to hate, one hand to smite:

I have none to love nor do me good, not one.

One in the world's width, of all souls alive.

I am dead and slain already in your

By God, if ever I stand up strong again, I will be even with all you. Doth she think

I fear her? there is none that lives I

What said she to you?

Crawford. With her last breath she said

You should no longer live in fear of

Darnley. Why, so I do not: nay, nor ever did.

Let her come now, and find I fear her

What shall she say?

queen!

Enter the QUEEN, attended. Queen. How is it with our lord? Darnley. Ill is it, - ill,

Madam, and no lord but your servant here.

Will you not kiss me?

Queen. Nay, you are sick indeed. Let me sit here, and give me but your

I have a word with you to speak for love.

And not for chiding.

Darnley. I beseech you, no:

I have no force to bear man's chiding

Being sick, and all my sickness is of

That look so strange and heavily on

Howbeit I could now die, I am made so glad,

For very joy to see you. If I die, Look, I leave all things to your only

And of my pure love make no testament.

Nor lay no charge on any else for love.

Queen. I will rebuke you not but tenderly,

As a right wife and faithful woman. Sir,

What word was that you wrote me, and wherein

And wherefore taxing some for cruelty, Of what suspicion misconceived and

That came forth of your hand to strike my heart?

You that have found no cause, and will not say

You have found or shall find ever cause of fear.

So to misdoubt me, — what could sting you so,

What adder-headed thought or venomous dream,

To make you shoot at this bared breast

Suspicion winged and whetted with ill thoughts?

What words were these to write, what doubts to breed, Of mere mistrust and stark unfriendli-

ness?

Nay, and I know not, God can witness

So much as what you doubt or what misdeem,

Or wherein hold me dangerous or my friends, .

More than I know what source your sickness hath,

Whereof I would fain think all this is bred

And all ill fears grown but of feverish nights.

What cause most ails you? or what think you on?

Darnley. I think how I am punished, -ay, God knows

I am punished that I made my God of

What should I mean of cruelty but yours,

That will not look on my sore peni-

For my least sin, as God would look on

Though I confess wherein I have failed indeed.

Yet never in worse kind than was avowed:

And many a man for such revolt as mine Hath had your pardon: in this kind I

have sinned, Not in such wise as ever I denied.

And am yet young; and though you should cast up

How often being forgiven I have gone back,

And fallen in fresh offence of you that

Forgave me, may not any twice or thrice

So slip that is none older than I am, Or slack his promise plighted, yet in the end,

Repenting, by experience be chastised? If my weak years and grief may get but

I swear I never shall make fault again: And this is all, and honest, that I crave,

To have again my wife to bed and board,

Which if I may not by consent of you Out of this bed I never will rise more.

I pray you tell me whereof you resolve,

That I may die or live, who have no thought

But only of you; and at such luckless time

As ever I offend you, even the offence Grows of yourself; for when I am wronged or wroth

If I for refuge might complain to

Of any that offends me, I would speak Into no ear but yours; but being estranged,

What now soe'er I hear, necessity

Binds me to keep it in my breast, and hence

I am moved to try my wit on mine own

For very anger. Now, being at your

Will you forgive me? that for love in-

And fear of you have trespassed, being so young,

And had no good man's counsel, and no guard, No light, no help, no stay, — was yet

scarce man, And have so loved you whom I sinned

against. Queen. Why would you pass in the

English ship away?

Darnley. I swear by God I never thought thereon; I spake but with the men: but though I

I might have well ta'en hold on such a

thought, To hear much less things than the least

I heard. Queen. What inquisition was it that

you made

To hear such things as fright you? Darnley. Nay, by heaven,

I have made none; I never sought man

To speak with any; I swear I see no spies.

Queen. Must I return to your own ear again

The very words were spoken?

Darnley. I did hear

There was a letter brought you to subscribe

By certain of the council, to the intent I should be cast in prison, and with power

To slay me by your warrant, should

Resistance: Highgate said so; I confess

I spake with him; my father that first heard

Brought him to speech of me. Oueen. Spake he so much?

But Walcar, that at Stirling brought me word

Of this man's speeches here, had heard of him

That you with certain of our lords had

A plot to take our son, and having crowned

Reign for him king of Scots; whereon the man,

Being had before our council with good speed,

Swore he knew no such tale, and had but heard

Some rumour blown of your imprisonment,

But nothing of your slaying; to which again

His witness summoned gave him straight the lie.

Yet would I not conceive the tale for true,

That, being incensed with some our loyal lords

Who were not of the faction that should lay

Such regency upon you for your son, You had threatened them aloud with wrath to come.

What say you to it?

Darnley. I say you do me wrong To speak to me of him that as you say Belied me to you: who saith so of me lies,

And I will pluck his ears from off his head,

The knave whose tongue so misdelivers me.

And, I beseech you, think he lies that saith

I would be wroth with any man your friend,

Or would not rather give away my life Than by despite toward such displease you: yet

I have heard strange things here of a trustier tongue.

The Laird — you know him — of Minto, my fast friend, If any friend be fast on earth to me,

He told me to what bond what hands were set:

Yea, and more hands than those that signed me dead,

He swore, were set to slay me; but

God knows
I gave no faith to it, — would not dream

or doubt You could devise, that were my proper flesh,

To do me any evil; nay, I said

It was well seen you would not, by their writ

Against my life that you subscribed not; else,

Could I think once you hungered for my death, God knows I would not hold you

hungering long,
But make mine own throat naked for

your knife

As readily as your hand could pluck it

forth: Howbeit the best man of mine enemies

else Should buy me dear—ay, any of all

but you, Except he took me sleeping; as indeed

Were now not hard to take me: had I

A hand to help my heart, and health to

A foot to stand against them, God and

Madam, should oversee us and judge; but now

You see what power I have, what hope of help,

What strength to serve my will and my best heart

Lies in my broken body; ay, these know that,

What force is left to second my goodwill

They know who durst not else devise or do,

IIad I the natural might yet of my limbs,

What now - But you, if you have pity of me,

Seeing me how faint I am and how sore sick

And cannot eat for weakness, though I

And cannot eat for weakness, though I faint,

That makes me loathe my meat, — but will you not

Feed me and kiss me? surely I could live.

live, Being quickened of your hands and

piteous lips,
So sweet you are, and strong, and large
of life.

Nay, do but kiss me once though I must die,

Be it but lest all men say you loved me not.

Queen. I have a pain here takes me in my side —

I pray you — where my sickness left it sore

And liable to swift pains yet: pardon me.

Darnley. 'Tis I you cannot pardon, — I, woe's me,

You cannot love or pardon; but I swear,

So be it you will not leave me, I will go, So but I may not lose you out of sight, Borne in a litter, such as here I lie,

So weak, so full of sickness, where you will,

Be it to Craigmillar, though death went with me,

Or to the world's end, going in sight of you.

Queen. Have here my hand, then, and my faith to it, sir,

When there the healing springs have washed you whole

As they shall surely, with cold cleansing streams Whose medicinal might shall bathe your veins,

And kill the fire that feeds upon their blood,

I will once more dwell with you as your wife,

In all the lovely works and ways of love

And dues of duteous life and unity

That man may claim of woman. Tell me now,—

Ere we go thither, where the leech and

May help you, nor be far off from my son,—

What are those lords you are wroth at? since I hear

Some are there that you threaten, as in doubt

Their minds are bitter toward you: shall I say

You stand in fear of Maitland?

Darnley. Him? not I, -

I pray you, speak not of him for my sake,—

I stand in fear of no man: I beseech

Speak me not of him; I will see no man, To be our makebate and your tale-

bearer;
I have heard too of your brother, how

he says
I spake with him at Stirling, where I

swear
I came not in his chamber, spake not.

Of all whereof he has rounded in your

That I made plaint to him concerning

For all my faults are published in your

And I deny not one, and naught put off:

What should it boot me to deny my

speech?
But there are they that think the faults

they make Shall to all time lie still unspoken of,

Yet will they speak aloud of small and great,

And tax alike all faults of other folk,

The least fault as the worst, in men like me

That have not craft to hide or most or least.

God save you from such friendship: it is thought,

Through power upon you of such evil tongues,

Yourself have not your power upon vourself,

As by your slight still of my proffered

I would believe you have not; such a

Rode with you hither, - or unfriend as I doubt:

I like her not, - the Lady Reres, your friend;

I pray God she may serve you, if she

To your own honor; it runs through all men's mouths,

She was Lord Bothwell's harlot, who stands marked

For a lewd liver above all men alive: She and her sister both lie side by side Under the like report of his rank " love, -

Foul concord and consent unsisterlike In such communion as beasts shun for

Nay, for you know it, it lives on common lips,

Cries from all tongues, — you know it; but for my part

I will love all that love you, though they were

But for that love's sake shameful in men's eyes. Why will you wake not with me this

one night, But so soon leave me, and I sleep so

Queen. Nay, though this night I may

not watch with you, I leave you not till you turn back with

But for the lords' sake must it not be

known, That, if you change not purpose ere that time,

again;

Lest when they know it, remembering your loud threat

To make them find, if ever we agreed, What small account they had made of you, and how

You had counselled me to take not some of them

To grace again without assent of yours, They fall in fear and jealousy, to see

The scene so broken and the play so changed

Without their knowledge, that contrari

Was first set up before them.

Darnley. Think you then

They will for that the more esteem of you?

But I am glad at heart you speak of them.

And do believe now you desire indeed That we should live together in quietness;

For, were it otherwise, to both of us Might worse fall than we wot of; but I

Will do whatever you will do, and love All that you love; and I have trust in you

To draw them in like manner to my love:

Whom since I know they aim not at my

I will love all alike, and there shall be No more dissension of your friends and mine.

Queen. It was by fault of you all this fell out

That I must heal. For this time, fare you well;

When I get rest, I will return again. Exit with attendants.

Darnley. What say you now? she is gentler in mine eves

Than was your word of her. Crawford. Av, sweet to sight,

Exceeding gentle. Wherefore, could one tell,

Should she desire to lead you so in

Just to Craigmillar? whence report came late

When you are whole, we shall be one Of no good counsel toward you or good

Except the hope be good, there to be healed

Of all life's ill forever, once being bathed

In the cold springs of death; and hence meseems

More like a prisoner than her wedded lord

Are you borne off as in her bonds.

Darnley. By heaven,

I think but little less, and fear myself, Save for the trust indeed I have in her And in her promise only howeve'er, I will go with her and put me in her

I will go with her, and put me in her hands,

Though she should cut my throat; and so may God

Between us both be judge. I have been men's fool

That were but tongues and faces of my friends:

I see by mine own sight now, and will stand

On no man's feet but mine. Give me to drink;

I will sleep now; my heart is healed of fear.

Scene XIV. — The Queen's Apartment in the same.

The Queen and Paris.

Queen. Here is the letter for your lord to know

I bring the man on Monday, as is writ, Hence to Craigmillar. Say too this by mouth,—

The Lady Reres can witness with mine oath

I would not let him kiss me. Bid our lord,

Mine and your lord, inquire of Maitland first

If our past purpose for Craigmillar hold,

Or if the place be shifted, and send word

To me that here await his will by you. Be of good speed; I say not of good trust,

Who know you perfect in his trust and mine.

Farewell.

Paris. I am gone with all good haste I may,

And here come back to serve your majesty.

Hath it no further counsel or command To be my message?

Queen. Tell him, night and day

And fear and hope are grown one thing to me

Save for his sake: and say mine hours and thoughts

Are as one fire devouring grain by

This pile of tares and drift of crumbling brands

That shrivels up in the slow breath of time

The part of life that keeps me far from him,

The heap of dusty days that sunder us.

I would I could burn all at once away, And our lips meet across the mid red flame,

Thence unconsumed, being made of keener fire

Than any burns on earth. Say that mine eyes

Ache with mine heart, and thirst with all my veins,

Requiring him they have not. Say my life

Is but as sleep, and my sleep very life, That dreams upon him. Say I am passing now

To do that office he would have me do, Which almost is a traitor's; say, his love

Makes me so far dissemble, that myself Have horror at it; bid him keep in mind

How, were it not to obey him, I had rather

Be dead before I did it; let him not Have ill opinion of me for this cause, Seeing he is alone the occasion of it

himself, Since for mine own particular revenge

I would not do it to him that I most hate;

My heart bleeds at it. Say, he will not come

But on condition I shall cleave to him Hereafter, and on that word given of

mine

Will go where I would have him go:

I never have deceived yet any man,

But I remit me to my master's will In all things wholly; bid him send me

What I shall do, and come what may thereof

I shall obey him; if some new subtler

By medicine may be thought on when I bring

The man here to Craigmillar, that as

May not this long time of himself go forth

Out of the house, let him advise him-

self

How to put this in hand: for all I find, This man I here endure to play upon Lives now in great suspicion; yet my word

Hath credit with him, but not far

enough

For him to show me any thing; but yet I shall draw forth of him what thing I will

If my lord bid me be more plain with

him;

But I will never take delight to wrong
The trust of any that puts trust in me;
Yet may my lord command me in all
things.

And though by checks and hints of that

I feared

This man sometimes even touch me to the quick With words dropt of mine honor and

my power

on mine own self, whereby I surely

On mine own self, whereby I surely know

That he suspects him of the thing we wot

And of his life, yet as to that last fear
I need but say some three good words
to him,

And he rejoices, and is out of doubt. He was seen never as gay of mood as

When I make show of grace and gentle heart,

And puts me in remembrance of all things

That may assure my faith he loves me well.

Let not my love suspect me for his sake,

Who take such great joy of his lovemaking

That I come never where he is but straight

I take the sickness of my sore side here, I am vexed so with it; wearied might he be,

This poisonous man that gives me all this pain,

When I would speak of things far sweeter; yet

He is marred not overmuch of form or face,

Though he have borne much, and his venomed breath

Hath almost slain me though I sit far off.

He would have had me watch with him, but I

Put off the night; he says he sleeps not sound.

He never spake more humbly nor more well;

And if I had not proven his heart of wax,

And were not mine cut of a diamond Whereinto no shot ever can make breach

But that which flies forth of mine own love's hand.

I had almost had pity of him; but

I bid the captain of my fortressed heart Fear not; the place shall hold unto the death.

And bid my love in recompense thereof Let not his own be won by that false kind

That will no less strive with him for the same.

I think the twain were trained up in one school,

For he hath ever tear in eye, and makes Most piteous moan to arouse men's pity, yea,

Humbly salutes them all, even to the least,

To make their hearts soft toward him; and desires That with mine own hands I would give him meat;

But let my lord, where he is, give no more trust

Than I shall here. Tell him all this;

and say
I am in the doing here of a work I

hate
Past measure; and should make him

fain to laugh
To see me lie so well, or at the least
So well dissemble, and tell him truth

'twixt hands.

Say, by the flatteries I perforce must

And prayers to him to assure himself of me,

And by complaint made of the men designed,

I have drawn out of him all we list to know.

Yet never touched one word of that your lord

Showed me, but only wrought by wiles; and say

With two false kinds we are coupled, I and he,

My love; the Devil dissever us, and God

Knit us together for the faithfullest pair That ever he made one: this is my faith,

I will die in it. Excuse me to my lord, That I writ ill last night, being ill at ease,

And when the rest were sleeping was most glad

To write unto him, who might no more, nor could

Sleep as they did and as I would desire,

Even in my dear love's arms; whom I pray God

Keep from all evil, and send him all repose.

And being so long my letter hindered

To write what tidings of myself I would, Who had wrought before for two hours of the day

Upon this bracelet I would send to him, Though it be evil made, for fault of time. I have had so little, and I can get no lock,

Though, that mine hands might end it yester-eve,

I would not see the man; but this mean time

I think to make one fairer: let him not Bring it in sight of any that was here,

For all would know it, seeing it was wrought for haste

In sight of them; yet might it bring some harm,

And may be seen if he should chance be hurt;

Let him send word if he will have it, and say

If he will have more gold by you, and when

I shall return, and how far I may speak; For this man waxes mad to hear of him Or of my brother; and when I visit him

His friends come all to be my convoy,

And he desires me come the morn betimes

And see him rise. This letter that I send.

Bid my lord burn it, being so dangerous, With naught in it well said, — for all my mind

Was on this craft I loathe to think upon, —

And if it find his hand in Edinburgh, Let him soon send me word, and that I doubt

Be not offended, since to doubts of him I give not o'er-great credit; but say this,

That seeing to obey him, who is my dear heart's love,

I spare nor honor, conscience, hazard, state,

Nor greatness whatsoever, I beseech

But that he take it in good part, and

As his false brother-in-law interprets, whom

I pray him give not ear to nor believe Against the faithfullest lover he ever

Or ever shall have; nor cast eye on her

Whose feigned tears should not be esteemed so much

Nor prized so as the true and faithful

Which I sustain but to deserve her

Whereto that I despite all bonds may climb,

Against my nature I betray them here That may prevent me from it; God forgive me,

And God give him, my only love, the

And welfare which his humble and faithful love

Desires of him: who hopes to be to

Ere long a thing new-named for recom-

Of all her irksome travails. Tell him

this; Say I could never stint of hand or tongue

To send love to him, and that I kiss his hands.

Ending; and let him think upon his

love, And write to her, and that oft; and read twice through

Mine evil-written letter, and keep in

All several sayings writ of the man therein.

Say for delight I have to send to him I run twice over all the words I send, And that each word may fasten in his

As in his eye, and you may witness me That hand and tongue and heart were

one to send,

Put all my message in your lips again That here was written. Say - I know not what;

I can say naught but with my silent

Speak with the lips of deeds I do for him.

Paris. Shall I say nothing of Lord Darnley more?

Queen. Say, when I did but speak of Maitland once,

His caitiff flesh quaked in each joint of him,

Each limb and bone shivered; even to the feet

He shook, and his shrunk eyes were stark with fright,

That like a live thing shuddered in his

And raised it ruffling from the roots for dread.

Let him mark that: though coward the man be, and fool,

He has wit and heart enough to know the worst

Of his wrong-doing, and to what manner of man.

Being fool, he did it, and discerning him

Think whether his cause of dread be small or no

For less or more of peril. So to horse. And lose no word sent of my heart to him.

### SCENE XV. - KIRK OF FIELD.

Enter BOTHWELL.

Bothwell. This is the time and here the point of earth

That is to try what fate will make of

I hold here in my hand my hand's desire.

The fruit my life has climbed for; day on day

Have I strid over, stretching toward this prize

With all my thews and spirits. I must be glad, If I could think; yet even my cause of

Doth somewhat shake me, that my

sense and soul Seem in their springs confused, even as

two streams

Violently mingling: what is here to do Is less now than the least I yet have done.

Being but the putting once of the mere

To the thing done already in device, Wrought many times out in the work-

ing soul. Yet my heart revels not, nor feel I now

The blood again leap in me for delight

That in the thought grew riotous and beat high

With foretaste of possession unpos-

Is it that in all alike fruition slacks

sessed.

The shrunk imagination? in all deeds
The doing undoes the spirit to do, the
iov

Sickens, the lust is swallowed as of sand?

Why, yet the stream should run of my desire

Unshrunken, and no deserts drink it up, Being unfulfilled; no satiate sluggishness

Gape with dry lips at the edge of the dry cup

For the poor lees of longing. I am

Not royal yet, nor redder in the hand Than war has dyed me fighting; the thing done

Is but for me done, since I hold it so, Not yet for him that in the doing must bleed:

I that stand up to do it, and in my mind

Behold across it mightier days for deeds,

Should not be way-sick yet nor traveltired,

Before I drink fulfilment as a wine; And here must it restore me.

Enter Paris.

Ha! so soon?

What news of her?

Paris. The queen commends to you

Her best heart in this letter, and would

know How yet your purpose toward Craig-

millar bears,
Whether to train him thither by her
hand

Or what choice else.

By counsel and consent of whom she wots:

Here must they come; James Balfour and myself

Have waked all night to see things well begun,

For that bond's sake whereto his hand was set

With mine here at Craigmillar; all things now

Stand apt and fit in this his brother's house

To entertain the kingship of its guest;

We have seen to it, Maitland with us.

Paris. I was sent

From the town hither, finding you set forth,

But why, folk wist not.

Bothwell. Carry to my queen

This diamond; say too I would send my heart,

But that she hath already, and no need To pluck it forth and feel it in her hand.

Bid her be swift as we have been for love,

And the more surety quickens our design:

The rest unsaid shall tarry till she come.

Scene XVI. — The Queen's Lodging in Glasgow.

The Queen in hed; Lady Reres and Paris attending.

Queen. What was his word at parting? let it kiss

Mine ear again.

Paris. Being horsed, he bade me say, Madam, he would be fain for love of

To train a pike all his life-days.

Queen. Please God,

It shall not come to that. Ere this month die

That has not half a week to live, we stand

In Edinburgh together. He will go Without more word or fear; and being

well hence — How looked my love?

Paris. Madam, as one uplift

To the height of heart and hope, though full of cares,

And keen in resolution.

Queen. I grow strong

To hear of him. Hath he not heart enough

To fill with blood a hundred of our hearts,

Put force and daring, for the fear cast

In all our veins made manlike? Prithee, Reres.

Was he thus ever? had he so great

In those dead days, such lordliness of

To see and smite and burn in masterdom,

Such fire and iron of design and deed To serve his purpose and sustain his

Hath he not grown, since years that knew me not,

In light and might and speed of spirit and stroke

To lay swift hand upon his thought, and turn

Its cloud to flame, its shadow to true

Its emptiness to fulness? If in sooth He was thus always, he should be by 110W

Hailed the first head of the earth. Lady Reres. It cannot be

But in your light he hath waxed, and from your love, Madam, drawn life and increase; but

indeed

His heart seemed ever high and mas-

As of a king unkingdomed, and his eye As set against the sunrise; such a brow As craves a crown to do it right, and

Made to hold empire swordlike, and a foot

To tread the topless and unfooted hill Whose light is from the morn of majesty.

Queen. When mine eye first took judgment of his face,

It read him for a king born; and his

Touching my hand for homage had as

Speech without sound in them that bowed my heart

In much more homage to his own. Would God

I could so read now, in that heart I And strife shall fall between us twain serve,

What thought of me moves in it, hear what word

Now hangs upon those lips; if now his

Darken or lighten toward mine unseen

Or his ear hearken for my speech unheard.

Why art thou now not with him, and again Here the same hour to tell me? I

would have More messengers than minutes that

divide Mine eyes from their desire, to bring

me word, With every breath, of every change in

him. If he but rest or rise; nay, might it be, Of every thought or heart-beat that

makes up His inner hours of life: yet, by mine

If he so loved me, should I know them

not. I will rise now, and pass to see how soon

We may set forth to-morrow.

Lady Reres. Can it be

He shall have strength? but let your highness heed

That pretext be not given for knaves to sav

You had no care to wait on his good time.

But vexed and harried him, being sick, with haste

And timeless heat of travel.

Queen. Fear not you:

I will make means to bring him in my hand

As a tame hound, and have his thanks and love

For bringing him so wifelike on his way. It is the last pain I shall take for him, The last work I shall do for marriage-

And wifehood well nigh done with duty

I have not much more time to serve

my lord.

no more.

Scene XVII. — Darnley's Chamber in Kirk of Field.

DARNLEY and NELSON.

Darnley. Thou hast the keys? This house is strange and chill, —
As chill as earth: I have slept no

better here.

Those two days that we halted on the

There at Linlithgow, I could see the

That burnt in her to be in Edinburgh, And here being come she sets me in this grange,

And till her chamber be made ready

sleeps

In Holyrood apart, and here by day
Hath still by her that face I warned
her from,

That woman's that I spake of, plays

and sings

There in the garden with none else; by God,

I like not aught of it. I am sick again, Sick-hearted, or my will should be a sword

To sunder them. I would I were away.

I have ill dreams, man.

Nelson. Please your highness — Darnley. Ay!

Is majesty gone out of all men's mouths?

Is my state dead before me, even the name

Dead of my place, then?

Nelson. There is come from court

Lord Robert Stuart to see your majesty.

Darnley. Let him come in. Robert?

he was my friend;

I think he held me dear till David died:

He supped with them that night. I found him once

found him once
A quick-souled fellow that would quaff

and kiss
The glow of woman's or a wine-cup's mouth,

And laugh as mine own lips that loved the like

Can now no more this long time. Let him come.

Enter ROBERT STUART.

My holy lord of Holyrood-house, good day;

You find a fit man for a ghostly rede.

Robert Stuart. I am glad you have a jest yet; but I come

On graver foot than jesters run, my lord.

Darnley. How, graver than your ghostly name? nay, then

'Tis matter for a grave-side.

Robert Stuart. Sir, it may;

I would be secret with you. Darnley. What, alone?

Why should we talk alone? what secret? why?

Robert Stuart. I will put off my sword, and give it your man, If that will ease you.

Darnley. Ease me? what! by God, You think I fear you come to kill me?

You think I fear you come to kill me?

Tush,

I am not the fool—and were that all, being thus,

'Faith, you might end me with your naked hands.

Leave us. [Exit NELSON. What is it? you make me not afraid—Sir, I fear no man: what,—for God's sake speak,

I am not moved, — in God's name, let me have it.

Robert Stuart. I came to do you such good service, sir,

As none has clone you better, nor can

There is an old phrase in men's mouths of one

That stands between the devil and the deep sea;

So now stand you; the man that toward a reef

Drives naked on a thunderstricken wreck

And helmless, hath not half your cause of fear;

The wretch that drops plague-eaten limb from limb

Crumbles to death not half so fast as you:

The grave expects not the new-shrouded man

More surely than your corpse now cof finless.

Darnley. Who put this in your mouth? what enemy?
How have you heart, or whosoe'er he

be,

Albeit ye hate me as the worm of hell Who never harmed you in my hapless days,

To use me so? I am sick —

Robert Strart. Ay, sick to death, If you give ear not to me that am come In very mercy, seeing I called you

friend.

For pity's sake to save you, or at least To stretch your days out for some brief span more

Of life now death-devoted.

Darnley. What, so soon?

God would not have it done, so young I am, —

What have I done that he should give me up?

So comfortless, — who hath no help of man,

They say, hath God's; God help me! for God knows

There is none living hath less help of man.

Nay, and he must, as I have faith in God,

Hang all my hope upon him. For God's sake,

Whence got you this?

Robert Stuart. No matter.

Darnley. At whose hand—
O me, what hand! who is it shall touch
me?

Robert Stuart. Hark!

From beneath is heard the QUEEN'S voice, singing.

Qui se fie A la vie A vau-l'eau va vers la mort ; Et que l'onde Rie ou gronde, Elle entraîne loin du port.

Darnley. She sings I know not what,
-a jesting song,

A French court rhyme no graver than a flower,

Fruitless of sense: this is no threat—
a toy—

QUEEN (from beneath, sings).

Sur l'opale
Du flot pâle
Tremble un peu de jour encor;
Sur la plage
Au naufrage
Le haut vent sonne du cor.

Darnley. What is it she sings now!
nay, what boots to hear?

I will not hear; speak to me, — pray
you, speak.

QUEEN (from beneath).

La mort passe
Comme en chasse,
Et la foudre aboie aux cieux;
L'air frissonne,
La mer tonne,
Le port sc dérobe aux yeux.

Plus d'étoile Que ne voile L'orage âpre au souffle noir ; Pas de brise Qui ne brise Quelque vaisseau sans espoir,

Noire et nue Sous la nue, La nef brisée à moitié Tourne et vire Où l'attire La sombre mer sans pitié,

La nuit passe, Et la chasse S'est éteinte au fond des cieux; Mais l'aurore

Pleure encore Sur les morts qu'ont vus ses yeux

Ce qui tombe
Dans la tombe
Coule et s'en va sans retour;
Quand sous l'ombre
Plonge et combre
Ou la vie ou bien l'amour.

Robert Stuart. Why do you shake, and hide your eyes? take heart; Let fear not be more swift to slay than hate. Darnley. I said, what hand? you bade me hearken: well,

What say you now she sings not? Robert Stuart. I have said.

Darnley. I will not be your baitingstock; speak plain:

Whence had you word of any plot on me?

Robert Stuart. If you will heed me, well; if not, for me

I will take heed yet that it be not ill. Weigh how you will my counsel, I am sure

If my word now lie lightly in your ear It would not lie the heavier for my oath Or any proof's assurance. Whence I had

This word you have of me, I am not bound

To put the knowledge into trust of you Who trust not me in asking.

Darnley. What! I knew

There was no plot but yours to scare me, none, —

Your plot to get my favor, stay yourself

On me as on a staff, — affright me sick With blood-red masks of words and painted plots,

And so take hold upon me afterward Having my strength again and state and power;

A worthy friend and timely. — Nay, but, nay,

I meant not so — I am half distraught — I meant,

I know you for my friend indeed and true:

For one thwart word in sickness cast not off

Your friend that puts his trust in you, your friend

That was nigh mad a minute, being sore sick

And weak, and full of pain and fear, and hath

No friend to help and bear with him if

Will help nor bear not. By my faith and life,

I do believe you love me, and in love Came, and in faith to me: if I believe not,

God give me death at once and hell to boot.

I pray you pardon.

Robert Stuart. Sir, your faith and life Have neither weight enough to poise an oath

As now they hang in balance. If you will,

Take to your heart my words; if not, be sure

It shall not grieve me though you trust me not,

Who never think to give you counsel more. [Exit.

Darnley. Nay, but one word — how would you have me fly?

He goes, and mocks me. Would my hands had strength

To dig his heart out for my dogs to feed!

He flies, and leaves me weaponless alone

In the eye of peril, coward and false heart—

Should not the tongue be false too?

If he came

To affright me only with a fearful face, Blow but a blast of danger in mine ear, And make my faith as wax that in his breath

Might melt and be re-shapen of his hands—

Nay, I will see the queen, and in her eye

Read if his tongue spake truth, and from her lips

Draw forth his witness; if she mean me ill,

I cannot now but see it. Nelson!—
She hath

No trick to keep her from mine instant sight,

Knows not his errand to me; and at once

I take her unawares and catch her soul Naked, her mind plain to me, good on

QUEEN (sings from below).

Lord Love went maying Where Time was playing, In light hands weighing Light hearts with sad; Crowned king with peasant,
Pale past with present,
Harsh hours with pleasant,
Good hopes with bad;
Nor dreamed how fleeter
Than Time's swift metre,
O'er all things sweeter
How clothed with power,
The murderess maiden
Mistrust walks laden
With red fruit ruined and dead

white flower.

Darnley. What sting is in that song

to smite my heart,

And make the blood and breath come

short in me?

O God! I know it — his last year's song of death:

They struck it on his lips who struck him through.

Nelson! I will not see her — I will not die —

Enter the QUEEN.

Queen. I heard your call from under, and came in —

What ails you, sir? why stare you thus askance?

Darnley. I had a pang of sickness that passed by

While you were singing.

Queen. Is my brother gone?

Darnley. There was none here—

Your brother? what, the earl? Doth not his wife lie at St. Andrew's sick,

Where he is gone to visit her? Queen. For love,

Why will you lie to me in jest? you know

Here was my brother Robert.

Darnley. Ay, but now —
I did not say he was not here but now.
Queen. Has he not moved you?
Darnley. Why should I be moved?

I am not lightly shaken of men's breath; What think you that he came to move

me for?

Queen. In faith, I guess not.

Darnley. Nay, though I be weak,

I am no reed yet for him to blow and make

What music of me shall best please his mouth.

Queen. I think you are not, but for all winds blown

Of fears and threats fixed and unshakable.

What said he to you that has moved you not?

Darnley. Nothing.

Queen. What I you were moved then of his words?

Darnley. I say I was not.

Queen. He said nothing, then?

You held discourse but of days foul or fair,

Skies wet or dry, seasons and accidents,

All things and nothing?

Darnley. Would you not know that? Queen. Even as you list or list not, so would I.

Darnley. What if it please me you should know this not?

Queen. Why, you do wisely, seeing I love you not.

Darnley. I did not say so; I may hold my peace,

Yet not for doubt that irks me of your love.

Queen. Surely you may; good reasons may stand thick

As buds in April, in your judgment's sight,

To cover both your counsels from mine

eye
That has no lust to invade your secre-

sies.

Darnley. And if it please me show

it, as now it shall, You will not dread I doubt your love

of me. Queen. I have not heart to dread

the doubt I know
You have not heart to dread
the dread
t

love.

Darnley. Why, he came here to warn

Darnley. Why, he came here to warr me of my life.

Queen. Your life?

Darnley. Ay, mine; and what now say you to him?

Queen. I say he spake as your good friend and mine.

Darnley. Ay?

Queen. What more kindness could be shown of man

Than in your ear to warn me of your life

If it so stand in peril?

Darnley. What! you think

He told it me to have me tell it you?

Queen. It was done gently, brotherlike, for fear

The word of danger being first heard by me

Should strike too sharp upon my slighter soul,

And pierce my woman's sense with such quick pangs

As might dethrone my judgment, shake my wits

To feminine confusion, and by force Disable my swift thoughts, now maimed with dread,

From their defence and office: he did

well, And my heart thanks him, showing you

first his fear,
Who are manlike of your mood and
mould of mind,

And have but for your own life to take thought,

Not for one dearer; as, I know you well,

By mine own heart I know, to have heard of me Endangered would have killed your

heart with fear,

That in your personal peril beats at ease

With blood as perfect as I see you now, With pulse thus changeless, and with cheek thus calm.

Indeed I thank him for it, and twice I thank,

That he would serve you, and would scare not me.

Where said he was this danger?

Where said he was this danger?

Darnley. Nay, by God,

That would he not say; that I nothing know;

Save by some hint of shoulder or writhed lip

That seemed to shoot at you; and when you sang

He bade me hearken, and would speak no more.

Queen. At me! but if such fire be on his tongue.

It should be forked, and set on fire of hell.

At me! but if he be not mad, to you He shall approve it, instant face to

face,
Eye to confronted eye, word against
word,

He shall maintain or mark himself for liar,—

With his own fire and iron brand the brow

That burned not to belie me. Darnley. Sweet, not here:

Would I could fight with him! but being o'erthrown

Of my disease already, to what end Should he come back now, save to insult on me

Who have no hand to strike at him again

In championship of you? Queen. He shall come back,

And twice shall oversay the word he said

In your own ear, or else unswear it.
What!

Shall I be put to shame of mine own blood,

To mine own lord in mine own love

maligned,
Stricken with slanderous fangs of

speech, and stabbed In my heart's core of honor, yet lie

still
And bleed to death dumb and dishon-

orable? Rather let come the deadliest of my

kin, Mine enemies born, and bind and burn

me quick, Or ever I die thus; rather let all

The false blood of my father in strange veins

Be set on fire against me, and its heat Consume my fame with my frail flesh, and make

My scaffold of my kingdom; rather

My naked head beneath the mortal

And with my blood my name be spilt and shed,

Than this charge come upon me.

Darnley. You are stirred
Beyond all right of reason; be not
moved:

You see how I believed him.

Queen. And to see

Is my soul's comfort; but this wound that bleeds

Here in my heart's heart cannot well be stanched

Till by the tongue that smote me, as men say

That by the anointing of the sword that hurt

The wound it made finds comfort, I be healed.

Darnley. Nay, let him come; I will maintain it to him:

Here, to his face, he warned me of my death

Or present danger in you. Queen. He shall come.

But lie now down, and sleep; I have wearied you.

Darnley. I pray you sing me something then; indeed

I am weary and would forget; but now you sang—

Doth that French song break where you broke it off?

Queen. No, there is more. Sleep, I will sing it you. [Sings.

Sur la grève Rien ne rêve Aux naufragés de la nuit ; À la trombe, Gouffre et tombe, Au flot qui frappe et qui fuit.

Apaisée Et baisée Par les brises sans souci, Brille et vibre Au jour libre La belle mer sans merci.

Tant que dure La nuit dure Sur la grève où rit la mort, Sous l'orage Flotte et nage Le jour qui lutte et qui sort. Pas de brume Que n'allume L'astre ou l'éclair des amours ; Pas de flamme Qui dans l'âme Brûle ou luise tous les jours.

À l'aurore Tout se dore, Tout se fane avant la nuit; Et que l'heure Chante ou pleure, Dans une heure tout s'enfuit.

Cœur sans crainte, Œil sans feinte, Quand l'amour met voile a**u ven**, Sur la plage

Sans naufrage
Est-il revenu souvent?

L'ombre emporte La nef morte, Et la joie, et le beau jour ; Trop profonde Etait l'onde. Et trop faible était l'amour.

[The scene closes.

SCENE XVIII. - BEHIND KIRK OF FIELD.

BOTHWELL, ORMISTON, HEPBURN of BOLTON, and HAY of TALLA. Bothwell. If it be done to-morrow,

we shall stand

The surer that the queen slept here tonight.

Cousin, bring you my knaves from

Holyrood

t pightfall to that hinder gate where

At nightfall to that hinder gate wherethrough

We three shall give you passage with your charge

To the strait garden-plat beyond the

Whereto the door that opens from beneath

Shall stand unbolted, and you entering spread

Along the blind floor of the nether vault The train that shall set all these walls on wing. Ormiston. How said you, that his groom here had the keys?

Bothwell. That under door which lets us down lacks none:

There is no lock to palter with: it

But leave the bolt undrawn; and yesterday

By the queen's order was the door removed

At bottom of the stair, to be instead A cover for his bath-vat; so there stands

But the main door now.

Hepburn. That was well devised:

She sleeps beneath his chamber here to-night?

Bothwell. Ay, to the west.

Hay. She has the stouter heart.

I have trod as deep in the red wash
o' the wars

As who walks reddest, yet I could not sleep,

I doubt, with next night's dead man overhead.

Bothwell. We are past the season of divided wills;

Where but one thought is, nothing to be done

Has power to hurt the heart that holds it fast,

Or leave the purpose weaker by a wound

Given it of doubt or after-thought: we have

One thing to do, one eye to see it, one hand

To pluck it from the occasion; what he wills

None but a fool would mix his will to achieve With pain and fear; the mind once

shaped and set That works, and yet looks back and

weeps to do, Is but half man's; and all a man's hath

Is but half man's; and all a man's hath she.

Hepburn. Yet woman moulded outward, clothed upon As 'twere with feminine raiment, touched

with thoughts

Of female-colored fashion, woman's craft:

She sees and thinks on what could touch not us,

Nor graze in passing even our skirts of sense:

Takes order for the hangings of his

Whom we must kill to her hand, lest water soil

The sable velvet from his bath, and bids

Pluck down and save them; such slight things and strange As take the thought and hold the eye of

girls,

Her soul, as full of great things as it is,

As large and fiery, bright and passionate,

Takes no less thought for, and hath heed of these

No less than of high deed and deep desire

Beyond where sight can scale or thought can dive

Of narrower eye and shallower spirit than hers.

Bothwell. Most royal is she, but of soul not all

Uncurbable, nor of all shafts that fly Scathless, nor of all shots invulnerable:

She had no part else and no power in us,

No part in all that mingling makes up man,

No power upon our earth who are earthlier made; She has the more might on men's ways

of soul

Not being almighty, nor from all man's

moods Divided, but as passion-touched and

mixed With all such moods as men are; nay,

not these,

But such as bear the rule of these, and lead

Which way they will — women's; and being so mixed

She is even the more entire, more whole and strong,

Herself and no self other. She nor I Live now on thoughts and words; the deed it is. Our deed alone we live by, till being Decline and dwindle from the shape done

It leave us time for life that deals with these.

I will be with you ere night fall again Within the town-wall; thither get you

now. And doubt not of us.

Ormiston. Doubt not you to find All ready by the night and need: fare-

[Exeunt all but BOTHWELL. Bothwell. The time is breathless; earth sees heaven as chill

In the after air declining from high

I would the winds would muster, or the

Show half an eye-blink of his face that

hangs Now downward to the sea, curbed in

with cloud. And with a brief breath fire the rack that flies.

Why should not flame break over Arthur's Seat

This hour, and all the heaven with burning tongues

Cry from the world's height to the under

That ends it for us gazing? If the sky Had speech as it hath fire, or night or day

Voice to declare God's pleasure or his wrath

With their dumb lips of light, from moon or sun

Or the mute mouths of stars, would earth that heard

Take thought and counsel of the cause,

Men's hearts up for our deed's sake here? I am wrought

Out of myself even by this pause and peace

In heaven and earth, that will not know

Nor what we compass; in this face of

things, Here in this eye of ever-during life

That changes not in changing, fear and hope,

The life we live, the life we take, alike

they held,

Their import and significance: all seem Less good and evil, worth less hate and love,

Than we would have them for our high heart's sake.

How shall this day, when all these days are done,

Seem to me standing where it sets my

Nay, whence shall I behold it? or who knows

What crest or chasm, what pit or pinnacle,

Shall feel my foot or gulf my body down.

Bear up or break me falling? Fall or stand,

At least I live not as the beasts that

But with a king's life or man's death at

Make all my travails perfect; and a queen,

The fairest face I have loved and fieriest heart.

Shines with my star or sets.

Enter Paris.

What sends she now? Paris. I came to know if you stand fixed indeed,

Sir, for to-morrow.

Bothwell. For to-morrow, man; What ails him at to-morrow?

Paris. My dread lord,

Naught ails me but as part of your design;

But I besecch you by your trust of me. What says this while my lord of Murray?

Bothwell. He!

He will nor help nor hinder — but a!!'s one.

Paris. He is wise. Bothwell. But is it to tell me he is

That you bestow your own wise tongue

on me? Came you to advise me or to show my trust

How cracked a casket I have closed it in

Who trusted in so white a heart as yours?

Paris. I have a message -

Bothwell. Well, the message, then:

And as you are wise, make me not wroth to-day,

Who am but foolish.

Paris. Sir, the queen by me

Wills you to know that from her husband's mouth

She is assured there came here yester-

To him her brother, Abbot of St. Cross,

To warn him of some danger.

Bothwell. From his mouth!

Had ever mouth such hunger to eat

Well, it shall soon be filled and shut.
What else?

Paris. She has taxed hereof her

Bothwell. What, by word?

Paris. No, but by note she let him wist she knew it.

Now he denies again his word aloud— Bothwell. He does the wiselier; there your tongue struck right;

She has wise men to brethren.

Paris. And desires

To prove it on the accuser's body, being Once whole again to meet him.

Bothwell. A fair proof:

Doth either sword seek mine for second?

Paris. Nay;

But the queen bade me tell you he should go

Γο her lord's chamber for his challenge' sake,

And do that thing ye wot of.

Bothwell. Tell the queen will speak to him. We must not mar

our hand;
Say will I see him before the morrow

Say will I see him before the morrow morn.

Howbeit, it shall be well but for a night

To put our present purpose back, and see

If chance or craft will mend our hand again.

Who strikes most sure strikes deepest. Say I go To try this brother's edge; if he be sure,

He shall well serve us as a glove to wear And strike, and have the whiter hands

[Exeunt severally.

Scene XIX. — Darnley's Chamber.

DARNLEY and NELSON.

Darnley. I never had such evil dreams as now.

Save for the terror of them and after pain, I durst well swear I had not slept to-

durst well night.

to show.

Nelson. You have slept seven hours. Darnley. I have been seven years in hell:

Mine eyes are full yet of the flames, my flesh

Feels creep the fire upon it; even my heart

Is as a sere leaf shrunken.

Nelson. Being awake,

Let not it move you.

Darnley. Nay, it shall not move. Yet were they dreams to shake with

waking fear

A sounder state than mine is. *Nelson*. Sir, what dreams?

Darnley. No matter what: I'll tell thee yet some part,

That thou may'st know I shrink not for no cause. I dreamed this bed here was a boat

adrift
Wherein one sat with me who played

and sang,
Yet of his cittern I could hear no note

Nor in what speech he sang inaudibly, But watched his working fingers and quick lips

As with a passionate and loathing fear, And could not speak nor smite him

and methought
That this was David; and he knew my

heart,

How fain I would have smitten him, and laughed

As 'twere to mock my helpless hands and hate.

So drove we toward a rock whereon one sat Singing, that all the highest air of

heaven

Was kindled into light therewith, and shone

As with a double dawn; stars east and

Lightened with love to hear her, and the sky

Brake in red bloom as leaf-buds break in spring,

But these bore fires for blossoms: then

My heart too kindled, and sprang up and sang,

And made sweet music in me, to keep time

With that swift singing; then as fire drops down

Dropped, and was quenched, and in joy's stead I felt

Fear ache in me like hunger; and I

These were not stars, nor overhead was heaven.

heaven, But a blind vault more thick and gross

than earth,
The nether firmament that roofs in hell:

And those hot lights were of lost souls, and this

The sea of tears and fire below the world

world That still must wash and cleanse not

of one curse

The fair foul strands with all its wandering brine:

And as we drove I felt the shallop's sides,

Sapped by the burning water, plank from plank

Severing; and fain I would have cried on God,

But that the rank air took me by the throat;

And ever she that sat on the sea-rock Sang, and about her all the reefs were

With bones of men whose souls were turned to fire;

And if she were or were not what I thought,

Meseemed we drew not near enough to know;

For ere we came to split upon that reef The sundering planks opened, and through their breach

Swarmed in the dense surf of the dolorous sea

With hands that plucked and tongues thrust out at us,

And fastened on me flame-like, that my flesh

Was molten as with earthly fire, and dropped

From naked bone and sinew; but mire eyes

The hot surf seared not, nor put out my sense;

For I beheld and heard out of the

Voices that shrieked and heads that rose, and knew

Whose all they were, and whence their wrath at me;

For all these cried upon me that mine ears

Rang, and my brain was like as beaten brass,

Vibrating; and the froth of that foul tide

Was as their spittle shot in my full face

That burnt it; and with breast and flanks distent ...
I strained myself to curse them back,

and lacked

Breath; the sore surge throttled my

Breath; the sore surge throttled my tongueless speech,

Though its weight buoyed my dipping chin, that sank

No lower than where my lips were burnt with brine

And my throat clenched fast of the strangling sea,

Till I swam short with sick strokes, as one might

Whose hands were maimed. Then mine ill spirit of sleep

Shifted, and showed me as a garden walled,

Wherein I stood naked, a shipwrecked man,

Stunned yet and staggered from the sea, and soiled

With all the weed and scurf of the gross wave

Whose breach had cast me broken on that shore;

And one came like a god in woman's

And took mine eyes with hers, and gave

me fruit As red as fire, but full of worms within That crawled and gendered; and she

gave me wine, But in the cup a toad was; and she

said,
Eat, and I ate, and Drink, and I did
drink.

And sickened; then came one with spur

on heel Red from his horse o'erridden, smeared

with dust,
And took my hand to lead me as to rest,
Being bruised yet from the sea-breach;
and his hand

Was as of molten iron wherein mine
Was as a brand in fire; and at his feet
The earth split, and I saw within the
gulf

As in clear water mine own writhen

face, Eaten of worms and living; then I

woke.

Nelson. It was a foul and formless dream, my lord,

With no soul in it.

Darnley. Nay, I think it had not.
And I did mind me, waking, how the
queen

Sang me a song of shipwreck, and strange seas,

And love adrift by night, and fires burnt out

That shine but for a song's length: I did think

It was this singing made up half my dream.

For there was talk of storms in it, and stars,

And broken ships, and death that rode in the air:

So was there in my dream. What step comes here?

Enter ROBERT STUART.
Robert Stuart. I come to change less
than a word with you,

And take my leave for all your rest of life.

Darnley. I will not speak alone with you again:

Stay by me there.

Robert Stuart. Have you not armor on?

You should not sleep with sword ungirt on thigh,

Lest one should fall upon you. For this time

I come indeed to see if you be man, Or ever knew beyond the naked name What grace and office should belong to man

Or purpose to his sword. Reply not yet:

I know you are sick, weak, pitiful, half dead,

And with the ingrained infection of your soul

Its bodily house grown rotten; all you will;

You cannot swear yourself that piteous thing

That I will not believe you wretcheder; No flesh could harbor such a worm alive

As this thing in you taken for a soul,
And 'scape corruption; but if you shall
live

To stand again afoot and strike one stroke

For your own hand and head, you shall

fight with me
Or wear the lie writ red upon your face

With my hand's buffet, that you spake
who said
I had given you note of danger from

the queen.

Darnley. Is it a plot, her plot upon

me? Sir, By God, I never said so: what I said

I have heart and sword to uphold against all swords,

And kill you if I might as many times As you shall iterate on me this for true Which is most false. When I may

stand and go —

Robert Stuart. Yea, then shall we see fighting. But as now

You can but swear you said not this of

me?

Darnley. I am not bound to swear it or unswear

At any bidding; but so much I will — That you may see no hot foul words of

Have quenched in me the old thought of fellowship —

As swear again I said but what I might With honor and clear heart: I spake no word

To bring you in suspicion, or to turn Thwart eyes upon you of men's jealousies,

Or cast you out of favor with the queen; I said but you did warn me of my life, As being my fast friend still, I thanked you for it.

I know not what she says I said, but

I know: I spake no treason of you.

This is a foolish wind of wrath that shakes

And wrecks your faith in me, mine own in you

Being firm and flawless; what you have said, you have said:

And what I have spoken of you was no

Than I had right to speak, and rest your friend.

Robert Stuart. Will you fight with me to maintain so much?

Darnley. If I might rise, I would put off my state

To stand against you equal; you did say it,

That I was even as one the law damns dead, And she was parcel of my peril.

Robert Stuart. Ay! You said so to her?

Darnley. She will not say I did. Robert Stuart. Plight not your faith to that: I am assured

You said so, and so lied; and this last

I bind you yet to meet me on this cause, Or bear the lie about you as a badge. Darnley. By God, I will grow strong

to fight with you.

living face again,

It shall be as mine enemy's; foot to foot And hand to mortal hand we twain will

meet.

Or ere the day dawn I shall see you dead.

Darnley. I am like to die, then? and your warlike words

Have so much iron in them, and your heart

Such daring to provoke one well-nigh

I wist your tongue would move more tenderly

If I had now my strength of natural hand

And body to bear arms: but these shall

And you change face, and lower your look to see.

Robert Stuart. I will abide my peril: do you the like,

You shall do wisely; should I say farewell,

It were to bid you fare not as they do Who are of your kind or of your fortune; yet

I bid you, sir, fare better than I think.

Darnley. Ay, you think venomously. What hour to-day

Should the queen come?

Nelson. To-night your highness knows Her man Sebastian weds a maid of hers,

And she makes feast for them in Holy-

With masque and music; having early supped,

She will be here somewhile with certain lords

To visit you, and so pass back ere night. Darnley. She shall not make so much, when I am revived,

Of outland folk and fiddlers, who should have

Too much of them by this. I would she had come

To see me turn the lie back on his lips. I did not answer as I might, being whole,

Robert Stuart. If I shall see your But yet not like a sick man, ha? like one

Whose wit and heart lie sick too with his flesh?

Nelson. Nay, with your natural spirit of speech you spoke,

With the same heart and tongue you have in health.

Darnley. I think I did; I would she had come betimes.

Scene XX. - The Garden behind KIRK OF FIELD.

BOTHWELL, ORMISTON, HAY.

Bothwell. Did I not bid them spare no speed? the devil

I think has maimed their feet in my despite,

To keep a knave so piteous out of hell. By God, it will be moonrise ere they

Ormiston. Tush, man! the night is close.

Bothwell. Ay, close and safe

As is the lock of a girl's maidenhood When the gold key turns in it. They

halt like jades; God plague their laggard limbs with

goads of fire!

Must they fall spavined now? Hay. Here come they three,

And with charged hands; be not so outward hot,

But as their charge is ere we give it

Rothwell. Teach your own tongue to take your tune, not mine.

Enter HEPBURN with Servants. Have you some devil's cramp in your

bones, to crawi At this worm's race? Set down your load, and go.

[Exeunt Servants. What lamed these knaves' feet or belated you,

To hold us here thus till the moon were up?

Hepburn. 'Tis not yet risen; and your own word it was

Withheld us till the west should cast off red.

three are hands enough

To bear this down, and strew it within the vault.

While I go help the queen here bide her hour

Till you send Paris to me for a sign.

Take heed there be no noise. Let but two stay

To fire the train; you, cousin, for my love Shall be one hand thereto. Pass in, and see

Ye go down sure and softly. From this gate

Ye know the passage under; go, and speed.

[Exeunt.

Scene XXI. - Darnley's Chamber.

The QUEEN, DARNLEY, Earls of CASSI-LIS, HUNTLEY, and ARGYLE.

Queen. But I must chide you for one thing, my lord,

That you would hold your servant Duram here

Though it be for love you bear him; he is sick,

And should not sleep nor watch with you to-night.

You do not well to keep him from the Against his health, who should take

physic there, And come back whole to serve you.

Darnley. Let him go.

I did but bid him leave me not alone; I will have one for service at my hand.

Queen. Have you no more but just this young man gone Whom I bade go even where was best for him?

Let your page lie at hand here.

Darnley. Nay, I will. You sent off Alexander?

Queen. He was sick;

We should show care of them we take to grace

More friendlike than by cherishing ourselves

With their forced company; the grace is more

Bothwell. Well, we have time. Ye To take thought for them whom we hold in trust

Than still to exact their service, tax their faith,

Whose faith and service we that lean

Should put to no more toil and pain than needs,

Requiting love with labor. Darnley. You say well:

But what should ail him? save that vesterday

He found his bed-straw here by chance

And flung it out at window; on which plea

He would not lie to-night here, till I bade him

Sleep with me as aforetime, being of

The man bound closest to my love and

trust; Then first he spake of sickness, as you heard

Who sat between us. Nay, but let him go;

The boy shall serve to sleep here. Queen. Sickness makes

All wills to serve it like necessity: Witness my will to keep my brother

Whom his wife's sickness at St. Andrew's now

Parts from our feasts and counsels, caught up hence

As if a wind had rapt him. Darnley. She is sick too, -

The lady Murray?

Queen. Nigh to death, he says;

I know not: who knows how near death he walks

Who treads as now most upright in the sun?

Argyle. Why have we death and sickness in our mouths.

Who come forth of a feast not ended

That in good time recalls us?

Queen. Presently. I would you were in health to dance

me down To-night but for the bride's sake; for A chair thrown down or such-like. the groom,

He may live easier that you grace him A rush and rattle as not.

Nor gall with favor or with jealousy. Darnley. We twain shall see this

night out 6therwise.

Queen. I am sure you shall see more of rest than I.

Darnley. Except I watch for sickness' sake all night.

Queen. That shall you not; I charge you on my love

Sleep sound for my sake. Enter BOTHWELL.

Are not you the bell That strikes the hour to sunder us, my lord?

Bothwell. Madam, I strike not yet. Queen. The better: sit,

And make no sound of parting till your hour,

No timeless note of severance. My fair lord,

Have you no fair word for your noble guests?

Darn. 'ov. I pray you, sirs, of your own gentleness.

Lay it not to my discourtesy for shame That I can but thus sickly entertain The grace ve do me; that I meet it so, Impute not to my will that is myself, But to my weakness that is none of me Save as our enemy may be part of us, And so forgive it.

Huntley. Sir, we are fain to see, Even in your gracious words that speak you ill,

Some spirit of health already.

Cassilis. I would pledge My name and word you shall not long lie sick.

Who bear yourself thus lordlike.

Noise verow.

Queen. Ah! my heart -

It wrings me here in passing; pardon

Bothwell. God's lightning burn them! will they mar me now?

Aside, and exit.

Darnley. Heard you no noise? Argyle. Where?

Queen. Some one stirred below;

Darnley. Nay, I caught

Cassilis. Of pebble-stones?

Darnley. Where is my lord gone forth?

Queen. Why are you moved?

Darnley. I am not moved: I am no fearful fool

To shake and whiten as a winter tree With no more wind than this is. *Queen*. Do you think

It is your counsellor come back in wrath

To warn again and threaten?

Darnley. Nay, for him

I think he hath learnt a lesson of my

To vex his soul and trouble me no more.

Re-enter Bothwell.

Queen. What deadly news now of what danger, sir?

Bothwell. Some fellow bearing fagots for the fire

Slipt at the threshold: I have admonished him

What din his knaveship made even in our ears

As if he had the devil there in his hands.

Queen (aside). It was of them? Bothwell (aside). Ay, hell take hold

on them!
It was their din, God thank them for it with fire.

Our careful helpers; but I have made them safe:

The train is well-nigh laid now: what remains

To strew, I have cha ged them shed without more sound

Than where the snow strikes.

Darnley. Must you part indeed?

Queen. They look for us ere long.

Darnley. Now know I not
What I would give to hold you here a
night:

Even half my life, I think, and know not why.

Queen. That were too much. I slept here yesterday;

Were you the better for me? Darnley. Ay, and no;

I deemed I was the better till I slept, And then —

Queen. Why, did my being here break your sleep?

It shall not break to-night then.

Enter Paris, and stands at the door. Bothwell (aside to Argyle). Time is come:

Touch him, and give the sign.

Darnley. The air turns sharp;

There came a wind as chill as from the pit.

Why do you fix your eyes so fast on me?

Queen. Not out of mind to mar your sleep again.

Darnley. I will not sleep alone.

Queen. Ay, will you not?

The town looks like a smoke whose flame is out,

Deformed of night, defaced and featureless,

Dull as the dead fume of a fallen fire. There starts out of the cloud a climb-

ing star,
And there is caught and slain.

Darnley. Why gaze you so?

Queen. I looked to see if there should rise again

Out of its timeless grave the mounting light

That so was overtaken. We must part; Keep with this kiss this ring again for me

Till I shall ask it of you; and good night.

Darnley. A good night it may be to folk that feast;

I see not how it shall be good to me.

Queen. It may be better. I must be some hour

Again among the masquers: you that sleep

Shall hear no noise and see no company.

Enter NELSON.

For this one night here comes your chamberlain:

Good rest with you. 'Twas just this time last year

David was slain.

Darnley. Why tell you me of that? Queen. This very time as now. Good night, my lord.

[Exeunt all but DARNLEY and NELSON Darnley. What folk remain by me? Nelson. Sir, four of us:

Myself and Seymour, Taylor and his boy.

Darnley. Let Taylor sleep here in my room to-night,

You three in the south gallery.

Nelson. Well, my lord.

Darnley. I am left here very lonely. She was kind.

Most kind she was; but what should make her speak

Of David's slaving?

Nelson. A word that shot by chance; A shaft of thought that grazed her and flew by.

Darnley. Why should she tell me of it? My heart runs low;

As if my blood beat out of tune with life,

I feel the veins shuddering shrink in, and all

My body seems a burden to my soul. Come, I will think not that way.

Re-enter PARIS.

Paris. Sir, the queen,

Having forgot for haste in parting hence Her outer cloak of fur, hath sent me for it,

Lest this night's weather strike her blood a-cold.

Darnley. Take it, and go.

[Exit PARIS. I do not like their eyes,

These foreign folk's that serve her. Is it cold?

I feel cold here.

Nelson. A fair sharp night, my lord; And the air less cumbered than it was with cloud.

Darnley. I find no night of all nights fair to me:

I am sick here at my heart all the dark hours.

Give me the book there. Ay, my book of psalms?

What day is this?

Nelson. The ninth of February.

Darnley. How says it of God's foes,
they were afraid

Where no fear was? That am not I: my fear

Dies without food. I am not as were these.

I prithee tell me, of thine honest heart,

Think'st thou I have no cause to feed my fear,

Or keep the bitter life in it alive?

Nelson. I know not, sir; but what you give it of food

Is so much taken from your health of heart

That goes to starve your spirit of likely life.

Darnley. Why, then I will not feed it with false thoughts.

Call here my chamber-fellow. If the heart

Enter TAYLOR.

Be but the servant of chance cold and heat,

And the brain bear not rule upon the blood,

We are beasts who call us men. Thomas, good night.

[Exit Nelson. What, shall we watch a while?

Taylor. So please your grace.

Darnley. I have more mind to sleep than power to sleep:

Some unrest in me fights against my rest.

Come hither, Will. Of all thy fellows here,
I think thou lov'st me; fain am I to

think.

I would not live unloved of all men

born;

I have I shall not Dost they feel to

I hope I shall not. Dost thou feel tonight.

The living blood and spirit at ease in

Thy living blood and spirit at ease in thee?

Taylor. Surely, my lord.

Darnley. I would thy lord did too.

This is a bitter writing where he saith
How in his prayer he mourns, and hath
his heart

Disquieted within him; and again,

The fear of death is fallen upon him, see,

And fearfulness and trembling, as is writ,

Are come upon him, and an horrible

Are come upon him, and an horrible dread

Hath him o'erwhelmed: Oh that I had, saith he,

Wings like a dove! then would I flee away,

And be at rest; would get me then far off,

And bide within the wilderness, it saith;

I would make haste to escape. Lo, here am I,

That bide as in a wilderness indeed, And have not wings to bear me forth

of fear.

Nor is it an open enemy, he saith,

Hath done me this dishonor (what hath put

This deadly scripture in mine eye tonight?)

night?)
For then I could have borne it; but it

Even thou, mine own familiar friend, with whom

I took sweet counsel; in the house of God

We walked as friends. Ay, in God's house it was

That we joined hands, even she my wife

and I, Who took but now sweet counsel mouth

And kissed as friends together. Wouldst thou think,

to mouth.

She set this ring at parting on my hand

And to my lips her lips? and then she spake
Words of that last year's slaughter. O

God, God!

I know not if it be not of thy will

My heart begins to pass into her heart,

Mine eye to read within her eye, and find

Therein a deadlier scripture. Must it

That I so late should waken, and so young

Die? for I wake as out of sleep to death.

Is there no hand or heart on earth to help?

Mother! my mother! hast thou heart nor hand

To save thy son, to take me hence away

Far off, and hide me? But I was thy son,

That lay between thy breasts and drank of thee,

And I thy son it is they seek to slay.

My God, my God! how shall they murder me?

Taylor. I pray you, comfort your own heart, my lord:

Your passion drives your manhood out of you.

Darnley. I know it doth: I am harehearted, for

The hunters are upon me. There—
and there—

I hear them questing. I shall die, man,
—die,

And never see the sun more: av this

And never see the sun more; ay, this hour

Will they come in and slay me. O great God,
Sweet Jesus! will you have me die this

death,
Such death as never man before has

died? See how they will not let me pray to

you,
To take my soul out of their fangs and

hell!
Will you not make the sun rise for my

sake,
That I may see you in the dawn, and live.

And know the grace that God hath ere I die?

Taylor. Sir, for God's love — Darnley. I say I hear their feet.

Thou hast no ears — God hath no ears for me,

Nor eyes to look upon me; hands he

hath, —
Their bloody hands to smite with, and
her heart

Is his toward me to slay me. Let them come.

come. How do men die? but I so trapped

alive, —
Oh, I shall die a dog's death and no
man's.

Mary, by Christ whose mother's was your name,

Slay me not! God, turn off from me that heart, —

Out of her hands, God, God, deliver me!

## ACT III. - JANE GORDON.

Time: from February 10 to June 11, 1507.

SCENE I. - BOTHWELL'S APARTMENT IN HOLYROOD.

BOTHWELL, ORMISTON, HEPBURN OF BOLTON, and other Gentlemen.

Bothwell. Is my knave sent for to me

from the queen? Hepburn. Ay, my good lord.

Bothwell. I had happier thoughts of him,

Who served us but unhappily last night: This Paris had been faithful, and his tongue,

That might have struck a sting into my fame,

Had done me loyal service, and let fly No word to bring me in disgrace of men When I stood friendless; for which cause ye know

I gave him place with the queen's chamberlains

And promise of more furtherance; but this thing

Has turned his six years' service into dust.

And made his faith as running water

Between my hands that held it for a staff; For, since I first brake with him of the

He hath been for fear besotted like

a beast. Ormiston. 'Faith, he was heavy enough of cheer last night

When you came forth, and the queen parted thence

And aither to the bridal. Bothwell. By this hand,

I came upon him glooming and withdrawn

Up in a nook with face as of one hanged,

And asked what ailed him to put on that gloom

Or make such countenance there before the queen?

And I would handle him in such sort, I

As he was never in his life, - by God, I had the mind to do it, — and he, My

I care not what thing now ye do to me, And craved he might get thence to bed,

as sick, But that I would not: then, as ye twain

saw, When came the wind and thunder of

the blast That blew the fool forth who took wing

for death, Down my knave drops me flatlong, with

his hair

Aghast as hedgehogs' prickles, and, Alas.

My lord! what thing is this? and He had seen

Great enterprises, marry, and many of them. But never one that scared him so at

this: And such a thing would never have good

And I should see it. By God, I had a

To have set my dagger here into him, but yet

I drew it not forth.

Ormiston. I doubt you did not well: 'Tis of such stuff that time makes tale. bearers.

Rothwell. I would not strike him for old service' sake,

Were he more dangerous to me; but, God help. What hurt here can he do us? I tell

you, sirs, I think my star that was not swift to

rise. But hung this long time strangled in

dead cloud,

Is even by this a fire in heaven, and hath The heat and light in it of this dead

man's

That it hath drunk up as a dewdrop drawn

Into the red mid-heat of its own heart And ye that walk by light of it shal! stand

With morning on the footless mountaintops

Crowned.

Hepburn. There are crags yet slippery to be clomb,

And scaurs to rend their knees and feet who rise.

Bothwell. I have my hand here on the throat of time,

And hold mine hour of fortune by the hair.

Had I let slip this season, I had fallen Naked and sheer to break myself on death,

A cragsman crushed at the cliff's foot; but now

Chance cannot trip me, if I look not

And let mine eye swim back among slain fears

To reckon up dead dangers; but I look

High up as is the light, higher than your eyes,

Beyond all eagles' aeries, to the sun. Ormiston. You will be king?

Bothwell. Was I not crowned last night?

The hand that gave those dead stones wings to fly

Gave wings too to my fortune, and the fire

That sprang then in our faces, on my head

Was as the gold forefigured on a king's.

Enter Paris.

What says the queen? why shak'st thou like a cur?

Speak, beast, or beastlike shalt thou fare with me:

Has thou not seen her? Paris. Ay, my lord.

Bothwell. Ay, dog? What said she to those gaping eyes of

thine?
Paris. My lord, I found her in her

mourning bed
New-hung with black; her looks were

fresh and staid: Her fast being broken only with an

Ere she addressed herself again to sleep

She spake but three words with me of yourself,

How might you fare, and when she rose
by noon

You should come to her: no more.

Bothwell. So let her sleep;

There are that watch for her. For thine own part,

I charge thee, tell me one thing: in thy life

Didst thou pledge ever promise, or plight faith,

To that dead mask of kingship?

Paris. Nay, my lord.

Bothwell. Seest thou not now these gentlemen my friends?

Not one of them but for troth's sake to me

And loving service hath cast all things off

To do as I shall and to fare as I;

And if thou think'st, whom no faith bound nor love

To serve that fool, or come 'twixt hell and him

To buckler him from burning, — if thou think'st,

That art my servant, thou hast sinned toward God

In our offence, this lies not to the

In our offence, this lies not to thy charge,
But mine who caused thee do it, and

all the lords'
Who with me took this work in all

their hands.

And if now thou have will to go thy

way,

Thou shalt depart right soon with rec

Thou shalt depart right soon with recompense;

But for all pains that can be put to thee Thou must not take this on thy tongue again.

Paris. My lord, I will not.

Bothwell. Sirs, with me it rests

To take some order for the burial soon. When the queen's eye hath dwelt upon him dead,—

As shall be, lest men say for shame or

She would not see him, — then with all

privy speed
He shall by night be given here to the
worms.

His raiment and his horses will I take By the queen's gift; for, being now highest in place,

I will present me kinglike to the time, And come before men royal, who shall

I stand here where he stood in all their sight;

So, seeing at once if I be lord or no, He that shall hate me risen shall need take heart

To strike betimes, or strike not. At this hour

Bold heart, swift hand, are wiser than wise brain.

I must be seen of all men's fear or hate, And as I am seen must see them, and smite down.

Or lie forever naked underfoot

Down in the dark for them to triumph

That will I not; but who shall overthrow

Must kill me kingly, sworded hand to hand.

Not snared with gin or lime-twig as a

Nor hurled by night up howling into heaven,

But in the sun's eye weaponed. Some of you

Go forth, and find what noise is in the streets,

What rumors, and how tempered, on men's tongues: When I pass out among them, I will

take Some fifty with me to my guard, and

ride As might their king ride. Be it pro-

claimed abroad, In mine own name and Maitland's and Argyle's,

Two thousand pounds shall pay that good man's pains

Who shall produce the murderers of our king

For just and sudden judgment. In few

If Mar be not mine unfriend and his

Who holds the keys of Stirling, we shall pass

With some of counsel thither, and there bide

Till the first reek of rumor have blown

Then call in spring our parliament again.

Hethurn. Your heart of hope is great: with God to friend,

A man could speed no better than your hope.

Bothwell. I tell thee, God is in that man's right hand Whose heart knows when to strike and

when to stay.

I swear I would not ask more hope of heaven

Than of mine own heart which puts fire to me,

And of mine own eye which discerns my day.

And, seeing the hope wherein I go now

Is of their giving, if I live or die,

With God to friend or unfriend, quick or dead

I shall not wake nor sleep with them that fear,

Whose lives are as leaves wavering in a wind,

But as a man foiled or a man enthroned

That was not fooled of fortune nor of fear. Exeunt.

SCENE II. - ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME.

The body of DARNLEY lying on a bier. Two men in attendance.

First Attendant. There is no wound. Second Attendant. Nor hath the fire caught here;

This gown about him is not singed; his face

Is clinched together, but on hair nor cheek

Has flame laid even a finger; each limb

And nothing of him shattered but the life.

How comes he dead?

First Attendant. Tush, tush! he died by chance.

Take thou no pain to know it. For mine own mind,

I think it was his sickness which being full

Broke as a plague-spot breaks, and shattered him,

And, with his fleshly house, the house of stone

Which held him dying: his malady it

That burst the walls in sunder, and sent

A ruin of flaming roofs and floors afire. Second Attendant. Was not his chamber-fellow's corpse as his?

ber-fellow's corpse as his?

First Attendant. Ay, woundless as

they say, and unconsumed;
I know not surely. But the blast that
made

The good town ring and rock here through her streets

Shook not all sleepers in the house to death:

Three souls have crept forth of the wreck alive

That slept without his chamber.

Second Attendant. What say these?

First Attendant. What should they say, with thanks for their own hap.

But that this chance is dire, and this man dead?

There is no more yet for sage lips to say,

That would not timeless be stopped up with earth.

Enter the QUEEN and BOTHWELL.

Queen. Leave us, and after take your charge again.

First Attendant. We must forbear her till her moan be made. (Aside.) [Exeunt Attendants.

Queen. Let me look on him. It is marred not much;

This was a fair face of a boy's alive.

Bothwell. It had been better had he died ere man.

Queen. That hardly was he yester-day. A man!

What heart, what brain of manhood had God sown

In this poor fair fool's flesh to bear him fruit?

What seed of spirit or counsel? what good hope

That might have put forth flower in any sun?

We have plucked none up who cut him off at root,

But a tare only or a thorn. His cheek Is not much changed, though since I wedded him

His eyes had shrunken and his lips grown wan

With sickness and ill living. Yesterday,

Man or no man, this was a living soul; What is this now? This tongue that mourned to me,

These lips that mine were mixed with, these blind eyes

That fastened on me following, these void hands

That never plighted faith with man and kept,

Poor hands that paddled in the sloughs of shame,

Poor lips athirst for women's lips and wine,

Poor tongue that lied, poor eyes that looked askant And had no heart to face men's wrath

or love As who could answer either,—what

work now Doth that poor spirit which moved

them? To what use
Of evil or good should hell put this or
heaven.

Or with what fire of purgatory annealed Shall it be clean and strong, yet keep in it

One grain for witness of what seed it was,

One thread, one shred inwoven with it alive,

To show what stuff time spun it of, and rent?

I have more pity such things should be born

Than of his death; yea, more than I had hate,

Living, of him.

as wise

Bothwell. Since hate nor pity now Or helps or hurts him, were we not

To take but counsel for the day's work here.

And put thought of him with him underground?

Queen. I do but cast once more away on him

The last thought he will ever have of mine.

You should now love me well.

Bothwell. Ay should I, sweet.

Queen. I think you shall: it were more hard than death,

You should not love me.

Bothwell. Nay, not possible.

Queen. I think God never set in flesh of man

Such heart as yours would be, to love me not,

Bothwell. Will you give order for his funeral?

Queen. Ay.

But if you loved not - I would know that now.

That I might die even this day, and my hands

Shed no more blood nor strive more

for your sake; For if I live, whose life is of your love,

I shall take on them more of toil and blood,

To stain and tire them laboring all their life.

I would not die bloodguiltier than is need.

With redder hands than these and wearier heart,

And have no love to cleanse and comfort them.

For this man, I forgive him. Bothwell. For which fault?

Queen. That he touched ever and defiled my life

With life of his and death. I am fain to know

You do not love me for his sake the less

Who so have soiled me with him.

Bothwell, Shall I not

Swear it, with him for sponsor to mine oath?

Queen. Kiss me before his face here for a sign.

Bothwell. You have strange doubts and dreams.

Queen. I will not have.

When part we hence, and whither? Bothwell. I have word

Your careful warden, the grave lord of Mar.

Will hardly give my followers at your prayer

Place to come in to Stirling at our back. Here now the streets begin to sound and swarm

So that my guard is now for more than pride;

Wherefore I hold it well we take with us Some friends of our own counsel, as Argyle,

Huntley, my brother-in-law that shall be none,

With Maitland and the archbishop, and set forth

To the lord Seyton's, who shall give us house

Till this loud world fall stiller than it is. Queen. Be it where you will, and how: do you but lead,

Would I not follow naked through the world?

For him of whose dead face mine eyes take leave

As my free soul of shameful thought on him, Let him have private burial some fit

night

By David whom he slew. I mind me now 'Tis not a year since I fled forth with him Even through the graves where he shal! lie alone,

And passing through their dusty deadly

For some few minutes of the rustling night

I felt his hand quake: he will quake not now

To sleep there all night long. See you Exeunt. to that.

SCENE III. - SEYTON CASTLE. LORD HERRIES and SIR JAMES MEL-VILLE.

Herries. So stands it, sir: she hath put into his hands,

Besides the lordship of the port of Leith.

The castle's government of Edinburgh, Of Inchkeith and Blackness, three master keys

That keep the doors o' the kingdom.
In Dunbar

He sits now lord, and gathers men to

By her next gift Dumbarton: while she

A privy message for a priest to plead With the French king, — that by his

mother's mouth

And his own hand hath warned her, if her lord

Sleep unrevenged, she being so shamed henceforth

Must hold them for her enemies, and put off

All thought to flee for fear into their guard

From peril of her subjects, — even to

She sends for payment of her dower foregone

Wherewith to levy hireling bands in

France
With but her babe for captain called,

Fenced round at least with all of these

she may,
Of whose despatch none here must know before,

Nor, if these fail her, of her frustrate

aim;
Then, ere her mourning month be here played out

With hound and horn and soldierlike delights

To recreate her natural heart and life, She must repass to Holyrood, and meet The ambassador from England, Killi-

Who comes to find folk sorrowing and in fear

With counsel for our peril and our grief,

And falls upon us feasting; and to him She plights her faith that by this parliament

Shall Bothwell have his trial, and the cause

Be sifted clear in the eyes of all good

Wherewith content he parts, or discontent,

I know not, but is gone; and she come back

Takes heed no more than of a harp unstrung

What plaint or plea, what charge or menace, comes

From her lord's father, but to his demand

For convocation of the nobles made Returns her word their house shall meet in spring,

And puts his charge by lightly as she may.

Of all this, nothing, in my mind, goes well.

Melville. Nor aught in mine. Your fellows of her faith

Who stand as yet in England on her side

Will fall off from her, hearing what I doubt

All ears will hear too soon: I have shown it her

By letter sent me from a faithful Scot That long hath wrought among them on her part,

And freely thence wrote all his fear for me

To lay before her, and his grief to hear

Such bruit of her intent as could but slay

The opinion of her judgment, who must

lose, By such design, God's favor and her

fame,
And in each kingdom that should kiss
her hand

Each man's heart born her heritage,

The noble mark she shot at. I, adjured Of him that wrote to bring this in her

Gave her to read it, which she gave

Silent; then came the secretary to me A short while thence, and took me by the hand,

Desiring me as by the queen's desire

To let him see it, who had given him late to know

I had shown her a strange letter, and devised

By mine own counsel for Lord Bothwell's wreck;

And having read, What thing was in my mind,

He said, to do this, which being known to the earl,

As shortly there was need to fear it should,

Would cause him surely seek my life?
And I,

It was a sore thing for true men to

So good a princess run on utter wreck, And no man be so far concerned in her As to forewarn of peril. He replied, As one who had newly left her wroth,

I had done

More honestly than wisely; bade me fly

Ere the earl came up from dining; and

being flown
I know he sought to slay me, who lay

Till his main rage was slackened; and the queen,

Who had made him swear to seek no scathe of mine,

When at their meeting next she showed it him.

Chid him as who would cause her to be left

Of all her servants: then he swore anew

I should receive no harm; whereof again

Being advertised I spake with her, and showed

She had never done me so much wrong as this,

To make the letter a device of mine Which came even whence I had given

her word; and yet Had it not come, I had held me bound to speak

Freely, with reverence and humility,
My thought as did that letter, being
of mind

At one therewith. But she would give no ear:

Nor is there force in counsel or man's wit

To avert this ill she binds upon herself, Who breaks the bonds in twain that hold her friends,

And fetters her own feet with gyves of steel,
When she hath need of them to stand

or flee

Before the face of peril multiform

That lightens on us flame-like: you, my lord,
Whose love she hath proven, are not

of me to learn

The immediate feature of it. Herries. Alas! not I:

I have taken too much note thereof, and stand

Too near its fangs to live of them unscathed,

Except I make haste hence.

Melville. What haste, my lord?

Herries. I have spoken with her of
their purpose blown

From lip to lip already on men's breath, To loose the bonds that bind her lover

By witness of the lady of Buccleuch, Who shall proclaim herself his paramour

And pre-contracted to him by promiseplight

To prove his wife no lawful wife, but bound,

Will she or no, and love him not or love,

To sue divorce from him; if all this fail, Then by remonstrance of their kindred blood

Found some four cousinships away, this bond

Shall melt or break that parts him from the queen.

Melville. Why, ere his marriage with the Lady Jane,

She had her dispensation from the Pope,
For the blood mixed between them, of

all bars Which might have maimed it with im-

pediment.

Herries. So had she, but they think

to cover it

As with a veil of invalidity

Pretexted for pretence, or with dumb

Darkly disclaimed: this shall not cumber them:

And they will buy compliance and good-will

Of Huntley to his sister's putting off By restoration of his forfeit lands.

Melville. All tongues i' the land will as one mouth of fire

Cry death and shame against it.

Herries. So said I.

Melville. So said you to her? Herries. I said so; whereat she,

As 'twere half smiling in a wondering shame,

Half mourning to be guiltlessly misjudged,

With fervent eyes' fall and with scornful lips

Protests me, never had she thought of it. Wherefore I hold it ill to tarry here.

Melville. Your wisdom shall do well to spare no speed,

But get it gone from eyeshot of them both.

Herries. I know it; yet would I plead again with her,

For pity and honor of the imperilled state.

That should be shaken with her fall to death.

death, And the crown shattered into shards of

For as a wolf anhungered and awaked, That long hath slept and starved, with foodless dreams

Assuaging its blunt fangs through bloodless hours,

The common people, that in dumb dim rest,

With heartless hopes assuaging its blind heart,

Hath fed for ages on itself asleep, Shows now the keen teeth and the kindled eyes

Of ravening heads innumerable, that

And glare about the wide ways of the world.

Seeking their meat of God; and if he fail,

Then of the devil that burns in minds of men

Rebellious, whom their heat of heart eats up

Till the fire fasten on authority
To lay red hands of ruin on all state,

And leave in ashes empire; as of late
This Ket in England, and his like that
swarm

At heel of the new creeds in Lutheran lands

To pluck the sun out of the heaven of rule,

And leave men dark and kingless. Hath not Knox

Struck with his fangs of speech on monarchy

No less than on the Church that first was stung,

Preaching for all men knowledge equally

And prostitute and perilous freedom shared With all blear eyes, brute mouths, and

unwashed hands,
That lust for change, and take all fires

for light,
Except the sun's wherein their fathers

walked?
And shall not these at any breach break

That flaws the sea-wall which forbade their sea

To drown all banks that bound it?

She will make

Of all that lived in Scotland hers and ours

A ruin and republic of strewn wrecks, Ranks rent, bonds broken, all things orderless,

A commonwealth of dead men's bones and dung,

Dust, mire, and blood, and one red rank of beasts

That rage and revel in equality.

Melville. 'Tis true, the commons are as waters chafed

Since this wind blew amongst them:
wave by wave

It lifts their heads up, and the murmuring air

Breathes hard and blackens with the blast of change.

Herries. And were none touched with danger but herself,

This yet were pity enough for tears of blood,

So fair she is, and less by place than

Royal, so high and so assured of spirit, So full of all things all men love or

Heart's light and fire, a soul born winged, with eyes

That mate the sun's eye and the lightning's; yea,

It were past count of pity, past men's thought,

That she should fall for love's light

sake self-slain. Melville. There were one way to serve her that would be

Most thankless, being thankworthiest; but none else.

Herries. That were no way for feet that would not walk

Red as her enemies' did, whose passage shook

With its near sound her life and fame; such ways

Let Morton take, or Maitland's weaponed wit.

Whose words are swords.

Melville. It may be so they will.

Herries. Death?

Melville. Nay, who knows when death may come?

Herries. Why, they

Who strike the spur into his fleshless

Who prick him forward with their craft for goad,

Or put for sword their hatred in his hand. They have done deeds of deadlier

policy Than make submissive show toward

Bothwell here, Then snare and slay him, or put the

queen in ward: Would they do this, they might be ser-

viceable But perilous must be, putting hand to

work

That treads nigh treason though for loyalty.

Melville. Whose may know their mind, it is not I.

Herries. She hath sent for Murray hither; in his eye

We may take note which way their faction looks.

If yet toward violence and red-handed craft,

This mood of hers will strip her for their strokes

Naked, and leave us handless that would fight

On her just side against them. God mend all!

Enter the QUEEN, BOTHWELL, SEYTON, the MARIES, and Attendants.

Queen. The wind has moved my blood like wine: I am full

Even to the heart's root of its spirit of life.

Flew not my hawk the last flight well, that sent

The tumbling hern down from her highest? I think

You have none better. Is our brother come?

Seyton. He is now alighting, madam. Queen. By this hand,

I would when we must 'light from horse we might

Take wing instead, and so what time we live

Live ever at glad speed save when we sleep!

It points and edges the dull steel of life, To feel the blood and brain in us renew By help of that life lifting us, and speed That being not ours is mixed with us and serves.

I would hold council, and wage war, and reign,

Not in walled chambers nor close pens of state.

But or in saddle or at sea, my steed As a sea-wave beneath the wind and me, Or the sea serving as a bitted steed

That springs like air and fire. Time comes, they say,

When we love rest, house-keeping sloth, and calms:

To me I think it will not come alive.

Herries. Madam, I would change yet one word with you

Ere I go hence, or others take your ear.

Queen. So shall you, sir; yet is my

heart too light.

And its live blood too merry from the chase,

And all my life too full of the air of joy Whereon it mounts up falcon-like for

And hovers at its wings' width ere it

strike,
To give wise words wise welcome: yet
what grace

I may to your grave counsels will I show And modesty of audience. — Tell my brother

I shortly will receive him. [Exeunt all but the QUEEN and HERRIES.]

My good lord,

It is for that old honor and true love
I bear your high name and your flawless faith

That yet mine ear makes way now for your words,

In trust they will not wound it for its

With any tuneless or intemperate breath.

Herries. Had I no heart, or in the
heart I have

No love to serve you, madam, and no faith.

[ had parted hence without more toil of tongue

Or strife of speech unpalatable and harsh

In ears made wide for music; but in me Is heart enough to burn with fire of pain.

If not to lighten with that fire their eyes For whose sake it consumes me, when I see

Danger and death masked as true men and bold

Attend about them with sheathed knives

in hand And shut mouths as of serpents. Let

me not Incense again your flame of spirit and

With faint and void reiterance of dead words

That spent in vain their spirit before:

I speak

Not now so much to move you as would

I had the might to move, but of myself Rather to save my soul of faith alive,

And my deep heart of duty toward your grace,

By speech though fruitless, and by love though lost,

That will not pass forth silent, and give
way
To loud-tongued ruin that shall speak

too high

For ears to close against it. Queen of Scots,

Lady that have the loftiest life in hand Even yet that ever was of queen on earth,—

Last hope of men that hope through you in God,

Last comfort of his Church, light of his lamp

That men have nigh blown out with

blasts of night, —

O you to whose fair face and hand uplift

The treble-kingdom islands should turn back

Out of the shadow of storm to follow them,

And in the shadow of faith instead lie down

Beneath the wings that covered your crowned head,
Even hers that brood above her fold

and yours,
The Church your mother's, that by no hand else

Looks yet to gather three lands in and save,—

Who have the heart and the eye and the hour for this

Which to none other God may give

So as you have them, — you that should be writ

In all the royal records of the world Savior, the light and the right hand of

God Shown in a woman, to bring back and

What was blown down or shed as dust on the air,—

You that have spirit and mind to ap prehend.

And to that apprehension put swift hand.

Nor slow of soul nor fearful, — you, our queen,

And England's heir, that should make higher on earth

The name of Scot than any star in heaven,

And on the cleft growth of two thorny stems

Bid one rose flower of Catholic royalty Not to be plucked or trampled, — Oh, will you,

So great, so fair and fearless as you are, That were you no queen, or such other one

As no such high cause calls on, you would seem

Not less a thing made to heroic end, A creature crowned and armed by God

to bear His witness to his work, and in man's

Stand signal-wise lighting the beaconed sea, —

Will you put all this as a garment off, And change it like a vesture? By your

Which is the life of this land's majesty, And your high soul which is our spirit of hope,

Slay not all these: help them that trust in you;

Help God, lest we believe him for your sake

Ill-minded toward us for our sin, to

This empire to a populous wilderness,
A riotous desert where things vile are
crowned,

And high made low, and low things set on high,

And rule trod under with foul feet and bare,

And kingdom parcelled by hard hands and red.

Pity this people: give not up your realm To its own madness that takes fire at yours,

And lights its ruin at your own ruin, to

By that blind light darkling to death and hell;

Cast not your name down under foot of men

For such ill cause as loveless love that is

Light lord of foolish women, or such will

As wherewith men self-slaughtered gird themselves.

For shame and pity and peril shall be they

Who shall attend and wed you to your will,

And the ring broken of the kingdom's peace

That is yet whole and circular as a crown Shall be the new ring on your wedded hand,

Queen. Have I not said I never thought of it?

Herries. I but beseech you, keep from thought of it,

Or from such show as puts it in men's minds,

Queen. If this be all your counsel or your care,

You crave but what you have: I have given no cause,

By favor shown to faith and loyal hearts, For the evil-witted world to tax me of love.

Twice have you had mine ear now to this tale,

And thrice I pray you that you seek it not.

Herries. I shall no more. God keep your grace in joy!

Enter BOTHWELL and MURRAY. Queen. Good morrow, brother; and

you, my lord, good day, Since you go hence.

Bothwell. Goes my lord from us vet? Herries. Even now I take my leave. Farewell, my lords,

And God be with your counsels. [Exit. Bothwell. Fay, he shall.

The queen was fain to have your voice,

my lord, Ere she go back to the distempered

Murray. That shall she have, sir. Queen. Brother, we hear word

How the good town is troubled of lewd

With libels writ and hung about the streets,

That in our servants' name deface our

With fierce invention: wherefore I de-

Your counsel with my lord here and good help

For satisfaction of well-willing men. Murray. Even such will tell you it mislikes the town

That Lennox, as they say, should be debarred

From entrance save with six men and no more

To hold his cause up on the trial day, And the main witness on his part refused As under charge of treason for his words

Set forth in writing on the Tolbooth gates:

This makes them doubt of justice to be done.

And brood or babble of devised delay, With tongues and minds diverse and dangerous.

Oueen. What!

Shall one proclaimed our traitor pass unscathed

To bear again false witness, for whose sake The ports are guarded, and the skipper

marked For death who helps him from this

kingdom forth To mock the judgment whence he

stands attaint Of foregone treason; and must now

stand free. And the law loose him, and receive his

word As a true man's and taintless? What are they

Whom by such witness Lennox would impeach

Besides my lord here who shall answer

Murray. James Balfour, and your outland serving-folk,

Sebastian, Joseph Rizzio, with two French,

train.

Queen. They shall have trial, and answer it.

Murray. 'Twere best

They did so soonest: time grows full of tongues.

There was one late went through the streets by night,

With four or five accompanied for guard That would let none take knowledge of him, crying

Of his own guilt most lamentably on God,

Lord, open heaven, and pour down of thy

Vengeance on me and them that have cut off

The innocent blood! whom the chief magistrates

Have seized, and cast into the four thieves' pit;

But still his cry hangs in the common Queen. Some traitor hired, or mad-

man; but I sent To seek the comfort of your hand and

help

For weightier cause than of such tongues.

Murray. What cause? Oueen. That shall he show who bears

most part therein; Yet are you parcel of it, and I myself

For love of both and honor toward you. [ To BOTHWELL. Speak.

Bothwell. My lord, I doubt not but your heart conceived Never that thing whereto being done

you feared To set your hand in sign: I therefore

pray you To look upon the charge for which I

In the land's eye accountable, as one

That was consenting with the rest our friends

To what for my poor profit was not done,

Nor only plotted for no end but mine; And, for the part your honor has herein, To underwrite the bond that writes me

John of Bordeaux, and Francis, of your And set your name for seal upon my side.

Queen. So much would I beseech you too: the bond

By you subscribed here in my lord's defence

Shall be the signet of your faith and

Set on my heart and his that honor you. Murray. I would my duty might in all things serve

No less your honor than maintain mine

own;

But I will set no hand to any bond Shall bind me to defence or fellowship Of deeds whereof I know myself no part.

I gave consent to no more than divorce Between two hands mismated, king's

and queen's,

Whereby the kingdom's heart was rent in twain,

And reconcilement found not where to stand:

But of no red and secret bond of blood Heard I the bruit before the deed took

Bothwell. Will you so swear? what! none?

Murray. I have said; and you,

That reft your kinsman Balfour by de-

Out of my hand and thwarted judgment, see

Your heart be set not now to climb too

A stair whereon the foot that slips grows red,

And, stumbling once in blood, falls whence nor wing

Nor hand can lift it from the pit again. Queen. Vex not yourself lest he should fall or stand

With whom you stand or fall not.

Bothwell. My desire Was toward no help of riddling coun-

But of such friends as speak with hand for tongue

And acts for parables: your wit, my lord,

Is nothing of the queen's need nor of

Murray. It may be, no; but to make trial of that,

Ere I take ship for France, the way! being barred

By force and strife through Flanders to the south

And those fair towns that with her high ness' leave

Shall call me guest a while in Italy,

I am bound for London, where I fear and hope

My tongue may serve her more than here your hands

If it make fair her cause in English eyes. Bothwell. What hath her cause to do with their bleared sight.

Or with her name their judgment? Who need care

What color we that breathe with our own lips

Wear in the mist made of their breath far off?

Murray. The ambassador that bore her last word back

Hath but made way for one at point to

Whose message, carrying weight as in wise ears

It needs must carry, will take form and

From present witness of his eye that reads

What mind is borne here and what work is done,

What judgment or what counsel most bears weight;

Which it imports us for this land's great sake

That the English queen misknow not nor misread

For fault or fraud of darkling evidence Bothwell. And you it is must give those blind eyes sight, Shape to the shadows of that ignorance,

form

To their loose judgment of us? What have we,

What hath our Scotland here or queen of Scots,

To do with English tongues? can we not strike

Nor stand nor walk alone, but for our

Must use their hands and feet, their wits and eyes,

To help us live, or live not? By my life,

Which is not held in pawn yet of their

I had rather be an English horse or ass Than on these terms a Scot, to square my will

By their inscribed conditions.

Murray. At your will

Lies your own way of life; nor yet this land's,

Nor theirs that living should be lords of it.

Madam, to God's care I commend your grace

Who take with careful heart my leave of you,

of you, Lest you too much should lack the care

of men.

Queen. Be not too careful for my

sake: your leave
Was given ere you could take it. Sir
farewell.

Murray. Farewell, as you shall will it. | Exit.

Bothwell. God be with you!

Your wisdom shall not be so hot of foot

But it may be outspeeded. If it lay Plots with the stranger, our prevention here

Must pluck the fangs out of its craft.

And first

And first
With his own hand shall Huntley draw
the bond

Whereto will we set ours in pledge ere long

To make them fast by contract: I being free

To plight mine own, as by consent unbound

From hers that was my wife pretended;

Being by this troublous time bent and inclined

To seek some stay in wedlock, and put off

The weak estate of widowhood, yet loath,

For worthy reasons of grave strength, to choose

Again a stranger subject, have made choice

Of me desertless for my fair deserts, And purpose even on heei of my di

vorce

For their good cause to wed me: this subscribed

Shall in my keeping be laid up, and straight

Hence must we back to that loud town of yours,

And take our danger by the throat; proclaim

At once my trial; if it be possible, Before word come from England; let

the post That brings you counsel of Elizabeth's Find the cause judged, and the cry fallen

again, And no link hanging of the gyves of

Round our free feet and steadfast.

Queen. Ah! not mine,

That are fast bound, and yet can stand not fast

Except my love's strength hold them up, and strike

These iron toils in sunder. If the bond Could bind and loose indeed, knit and unknit

Hands that must part from hands that are to meet,
With force of more than writing, all

my heart
Should bleed glad drops to sign and

seal it. Sir,

Here was again our enemy in mine ears Forewarning me of marriage; the same tongue

That was before a serpent at your heel Shot out anew to sting it; but you know The craft of this state horseleech, that by fraud

Takes pleasure to bear all the world in hand

That no one can be sure of him, and we

May least of all be by such lips allured To trust and find them dangerous.

Bothwell. Nay, by God,

I mind me how he left his neighbor friends

In his faith's name to hang for hostages Whose necks paid forfeit of his broken bond, And made his oath a halter for the Lairds

Of Lochinvar and Garlies. By my life That this keen tongue would strike at, in my mind

It were the best work worth a good man's hand

To quit them on Lord Herries.

Queen. No, let be:

You will unpeople me this land of friends.

Mine he must live, or lose his name, and yours

For my name's sake he shall be.

Bothwell. So might I

Find at his hands such friendship as they twain

Whose throats for him were writhen; and such a friend

Is he that stands behind our deed, and

He never heard of manslaying, fie! not he, —

Our darkling brother with close lips and clean.

The blood was no part of his bond, he says,

That his eyes winked on while his hand was dry;

He will not bear us witness, nor take part

With me that have done more than blink at blood.

He will to London, but to speak for

That will he, being a kindly man of kind,

Whole-blooded in his love and faith to you,

God wot, no bastard in his brotherhood. I would give God a year out of my life That I have kinglike hope to live with you,

For one sweet breath of time to strike at him.

And let my sword's lip drink his body dry,

And with one deep kiss drain his flesh of blood.

Who smells not by the savor of his faith

On what close nest of foul and fledgling hopes His trust sits brooding to build up himself

By overthrowing of that crowned head which keeps

His misbegotten forehead bare of gold —

And with my hand shall keep it?

Queen. Ay, though all

That breathe on earth mine enemies at his beck

Rose by the light of his ambiguous eyes

With his sheathed hand to strike, and leave ungirt

This forfeit head with empire: but I know

A stronger hand bared for my help and stay, —

This that I touch, this that I love; the star —

That points my feet on pilgrimage, the staff

That stays my steps back to that troublous town

Whereof they are weary, yet would halt not now,

But tread more fleet than fire their fiery

To that fair end where they were fain to be.

He will set forth to-morrow.

Bothwell. Ere we go,

I will take order that men's tongues be clipt

Who show too broad their conscience of remorse.

There was a knave of Balfour's in our trust

That hath by this, being found unsure of mouth,

Resigned it to the counsel-keeping worm.

If more there be that live not stingless yet,

The same dumb mouth that has nor lips nor tongue

Must open for them privily: the grave Hath gorge enough for all such secret food.

And will not babble of the hands that feed.

For them that being in blood of our own kind

Will stand elsewhere against me than in court,

I will make present proffer of myself To answer them in arms.

Queen. You shall not fight.

Bothwell. Not if no need be. Queen. There shall be no need.

Not in this cause, you shall not need to fight.

We will set on the trial presently,

And after we may sleep with no blood more.

Scene IV. — THE UPPER CHAMBER IN HOLYROOD.

The QUEEN and MARY BEATON. Queen. Is it not hard on ten?
Mary Beaton. At point to strike.
Queen. This forenoon will outlast the

night for length.

How looks the morning?

Mary Beaton. Like the time of year:
The heaven is red, and full of wind;

the clouds
Are rent and routed of the striving sun

Like a lost arby.

Queen. Is there no noise abroad?

Mary Beaton. The throngs grow thick in rumor; faces scowl,

Eyes burn, brows bend, and all the cry

Waits to break forth but till a fireflaught fall

To make the dumb brands speak, and shoot out flame,

When he shall pass for whom it waits to burn.

Yet have I seen as great a throng from

hence

As frets there now.

Queen. I would he had thought to-

To ride with doubled guard! What brawl is there?

Mary Beaton. The messenger from Berwick, as I think,

That would have entrance to you, and is thrust back

By the lord Bothwell's kin that keep the gates.

Queen. What! here so soon? I will not see him till night.

I am asleep; if there be brawls i' the court,

Call out the troopers, bid my French guard forth

To quell all rioters.

Mary Beaton. They are of your own part

That make the brawl, my lord's men and your guard

That press about the gateway.

Queen. The cry sinks:

Is he not come, that so their noise is fallen?

Mary Beaton. And Maitland with him: he signs them silent, takes From the English messenger a letter sealed,

And leaves all still.

Queen. I prayed him see me first

Before he rode to trial. All will be well, If he have stayed their storm, and keep his heart

High as his fortune.

Enter Bothwell.

Is that brawl at end?

Bothwell. Here is a letter by a hotfoot post

Brought from Sir William Drury, that his queen

Through him commends her counsel in to you,

And bids you, or my thought belies it, show

All favor and furtherance to your enemy's plea,

Lennox, whose cause she finds most fair, and would not

For your own sake see slighted or put by,

Lest your fame bleed: look if she say not so;

Else I know nothing of her maiden mind,

Who sometime lived her prisoner.

Queen. Let that rest;

But tell me what the spring was of this noise

That shook our hearing: would he speak perforce—

This English post, though bidden back
— with me?

Bothwell. But that our fellows thrust him from the gate:

My captain of the castle, a stalwart guard,

The Laird of Skirling, that I put in charge,

Called to the guide aloud, he should be hanged

For bringing English villains through to us here,

And hands were there to reive the rope to him;

Then drew your guard together and our troops,
Whose musters line the straitened

streets with steel

That holds embanked their muttering multitudes

Fill I ride through; and those within the gates

Hurtled together with blind cries and thrusts,

But at my sight fell silent as a sea Settling, that growls yet with the sunken

wind,
And holds its peace with unslaked wrath. Then I

Took from the pressed and laboring messenger

His letter for your hand, who were not risen,

And should ere night receive him: so I said,

And thus it shall suffice you do, so be it

We bear the bell to-day in parliament, Where I should be by this at bar, to stand

And make mine answer.

Queen. I am not sick of fear,

Yet my heart loathes its burden of this

And beats and drops like a bird wounded. Nay,

I do not hold you: go; 'tis but my hand Fastens on yours; my heart would have you gone,

And here again to assure me of good speed.

Whom have we of the judges on our side,

Tell me once more, whom doubtfulcolored, whom

Our enemies certain? let me know it again,

That I may read the bede-roll of their names

Here over in my heart while you are

To make it sure and strong, come evil or good,

That neither find me heartless. Bothwell. Of our part

The lord of Arbroath for the Hamiltons

Is as his father's person, Chatelherault, And Cassilis a mainstay safe as steel; Caithness and Herries are such friends of yours

As love me less for your sake, yet I

Must strike to-day beside us; one man

I would we might have razed out of the roll,

Which is the assessor Lindsay; who shall be

As poison to us; and evil is our chance That Morton being of kin to your dead man Should not sit here to help, as but for

this
I would perforce have bound him to

our side:
But let this be; we shall bear bravely
through

For all their factions and fierce policies As knives ensheathed against us, or being foiled

Find surer issue than they wot of. So, With such good hope as grows of a good heart,

Give me God-speed.

Queen. God-speed you as I pray

You may speed ever: all my prayer is spent,

I can no more of wishing; what I would,

That must you will, having my heart in you,

That beats but with your blood, thrills with your sense,

Thinks with your thought, desires with your desire,

And lives upon your living. Where you go,

You bear me with you; where your face is set

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Mine eye takes outlook, and where falls your foot

I tread beside you silent. Oh! this day Shall be to us as the crown o' the wave that turns.

And bears inshore the lading of our

With all the might of its great heart that breaks

And brings us into harbor: we shall

And brings us into harbor; we shall stand

High on the beach where it was spent, and praise

The faithful hour that served us; yea, even this

Shall be a dear one to us, held fast at

When all the pain and doubt of it is dead.

And lovingly remembered: you shall look

From your high place beside your hum-

ble love With kingly eye on this dead day, and

How she that set her crown about your head,

And put her own beneath your foot, as

Bade you fare forth, and kissed you.

Bothwell. I am returned,

Ere I pass forth, already in my heart, With my cause crowned: I cannot doubt of speed,

Who have your face before mine eyes as fire

And keep your words' heat in mine ear to burn

If I should shrink, and sting my spirit alive

For love's and shame's sake. When we meet at night,

A king's kiss will I set upon these lips That seal me royal ere I part. Farewell. [Exit.

Queen. I would mine eye were in my heart to go

With that beside him; but the heart it is

Sits now in the eye and follows where it may,

But a street's length; then part they, and the sight

Turns back, but not the thought; such wings it hath

As the sight hath not, and is subtler nerved

Than the swift spirit of the eye. O my life's light!

This is not I that looks forth after you To feed her eyesight, but who leaves you not,

Who rides beside you, breathes out of your lips,

Looks through your eyes, and triumphs in your heart,—

That unseen and inseparate thing is I. Look, he is up: how royally he rides,

As no king else on earth I and waves to me,

As who should say, Be glad; and glad I am, Who have the lordliest lover in the

world,

And the most heart to love him. Ay,

that steed
Should be the higher of heart that

feels him stride,

And moves the merrier-mettled: by none such
Was it before bestridden.

Mary Beaton. Was not this

Lord Darnley's horse?

Queen. Ay, when Lord Darnley was.

Mary Beaton. The horse he loved of

all the rest, and fed Ere he bestrode it ever? Oueen. Like enough:

What ails it yet to have eaten of his hand?

It bears not now the worse a better man.

Mary Beaton. Nay, so it seems: it bounds not as in wrath,

For aught I see, beneath him, but heaves up

A sidelong head toward his new hand, and turns

The light back on him of a joyful

So is it with only beasts that are be loved:

They have not hearts like ours. Queen. What need they have?

I would have nothing love him as I love,

And had it heart it would; yet I do think

All beasts and men are mad that love him not

As I should surely were I beast or

He can no longer see my handkerchief; Let us go in: I will not sit and wait

With the street's hustling faces in my sight. [Exeunt.

Scene V. — The High Court of Justice in the Tolbooth.

Bothwell, with Ormiston and thers attending, at the bar; Argyle 22-siding as Lord Justice; Lindsay as assessor; Caithness, Cassilis, Rothes, Arbroath, Maxwell, Herries, and others, as jury; Robert Cunningham as spokesman for Lennox.

Ormiston (aside to BOTHWELL). Fie! look not down so at your feet, my lord:

What devil is this that irks you? in your face

A fool might read you what you are: why, so

Might a man look that were now going to death.

Hold up your face, for God's sake, and look blithe;

Alas and ave wee worth them that de-

Alas and aye woe worth them that devised

The thing that shall make all us mourn,
I trow,

For you that now look sadly. Bothwell. Hold your peace:

I would not yet it were to do; I have An outgate any way whereby to pass,

As ye shall know, and soon. Trouble me not.

Argyle. My lords, ye have heard how to the indictment read

The accused who stands at his own instance here

Returns his plea of guiltless; and thereon

The accuser next invoked to approve his charge,

Nor answering nor appearing, leaves no cause

For us to judge; but here in his default Is risen his servant to sustain his part And unawares among us unrequired

Take up this charge here fallen, or stretch at least

Some form across of pretext wide enough

To cover with excuse this lack of charge,

Which else might seem with emptiness of cause

To mock your judgments; wherefore, if ye will,

He stands to plead before us. Caithness, we are content.

Robert Cunningham. My lords, I am here but in my master's name,

The earl of Lennox, to declare what cause

This day constrains his absence; which in brief

Is first the brief time given for so great work,

Next that he stands now naked of his friends

And fellowship of servants to maintain His honor with the surety of his life; And, having help of no friend but him-

self,
He hath laid on me commandment to

desire
A day sufficient for that weight of cause
Which he shall have to keep it; and if
hence

Your lordships at this present shall proceed,

Here I protest that if the assize to-day, By their twelve persons that upon this charge

Shall enter now on panel, speak him clear

Who stands accused for murder of the

It shall be wilful error in men's eyes,

And not abuse of ignorance, by this cause

That all men know him for murderer; and hereto

Upon this protestation I require

Of your high court a document to stand

And set my lord's right here on register, And those men's wrong who put it by to-day.

Argyle. This is some reason if the ground be good

Whereon his protest is built up, to ex-

Default of witness by defect of time; But here that ground is shaken, that

we find,
By letters of his own writ to the queen.

My lord of Lennox earnest to bring on, With forward expedition as of fire,

This cause for trial, and by all pleas intent

To enforce this court make haste, and being convoked

Despatch with breathless justice and short stay

The work wherein he seems to accuse us now

For too much heat to move too fast, and mar

The perfect end of trial with force of speed,

Preventing him of witness. Where-

Was his own will so keen, his plaint so loud,

So strong his protestation, to procure The speed too late reproached, too soon required?

Here are we met for judgment, whom himself

Bade the queen summon, with insistent heat

And sharp solicitation urged of wrong, Nay, with the stroke of an imperative tongue,

As though to impel some loath or laggard heart,

And found instead a free and forward

In her to meet his own; here sits the court,

There stands the man of him or his impeached

To give them loyal answer; where sits he?

Where speaks his proof? where stand his witnesses?

What sentence of what judges shall be given

Where none stands forth to accuse: Here are but words.

Surmises, light and loud and loose, that blow

In the air of nameless lips and babblers' breath

From ear to ear about the wide-mouthed world:

These are not for our judgment. Caithness. We sit here

To find if there be proof or likelihood More than of common tongues that

mark a man Guilty, and know not why this man or

that,
But some name they must have to feed

upon; And in my mind, where witness there is

none
Nor prosecution of a personal cause,

Even should we err to find the accused man free,

It were no wilful error, nor this court In any just man's sight accountable As for unrighteous judgment, being cut

From evidence that it was met to hear; Which we reject not, but require indeed,

Yet can by no solicitous mean procure. Moreover, sirs, one flaw there is to note, More evident than these proofs invisible,—

Even in the letter of the charge, which bears.

Ye see, the ninth day's date of February,

When all we know that on the tenth it was

This violence, by what hand soe'er, was done:

So that I see not, for my simple part, How any man, for that which no man did,

Should stand condemned; for at this date assigned

Was no such deed as this done in the

Maxwell. Why, let the charge be drawn again, and straight:

The court is mocked in this.

Caithness. How mocked, my lord? It is necessity of law, to keep

Pure hands by perfect heed of flawless words;

And that you stood the dead man's friend alive

Gives you not right nor reason to rise up And tax the reason or the right of law. Maxwell. Right! where is right in all this circumstance,

Or aught but wrong and broken judgment? where

Justice or shame or loyalty, to try

The truth whereon red fraud and violence tread,

And smother up the tongueless cry of blood?

Are we not here to judge of murder done,

And either from an innocent brow take off

The spot of its suspicion, or convince The branded forehead of bloodguiltiness?

Is there no counsel on the part accused, Nor answer of defensive argument

But of close-lipped evasion? and the court

In this forsooth is mocked not! We shall stand

The shameful signs of laughter to the world,

And loathing to men loyal, if this pass
With no more trial but mockery, and
the land

Sit silent, and attaint of innocent blood Before the face of all men that expect For our own sake what justice we shall show

Or be defamed forever.

Arbroath. Sirs, meseems

Where no charge is, that no response can be;

Where none impeaches, none can stand accused:

And of what mouth what challenge

is put forth, And on what witness what impeach-

ment hangs, To implead of guilt the man we sit to

try?
Herein I say it is the court is mocked,

Herein I say it is the court is mocked, Even all of us, and all the baffled land, And most this noble man that unaccused Stands at our bar, and finds not to confront

One witness, nor one enemy to beat back,

But only as 'twere a wind that sounds, a breath

That shifts and falters in the face of proof,

A blast that envy blows, and fear breaks off,

Disabled of its nature, by itself

Frustrate and maimed of its own evil will.

Lindsay. Who talks of envious or of fearful heart?

We hear the general judgment of the land

Cry out for trial, and from foreign tongues

Reproach cast on us that we cast off heed:

What should we do for shame if in this cause,

For doubt of one man's friends or of what power

Might stand behind to buckler him at need,

We durst not move, nor, though the world looked on,

Show but a face of justice? Cassilis. Must we set

Our judgments by the common tongue that strikes,

And knows not what the hour is? or become

Thralls to the praise and bondmen to the blame

Of men by no tie blood-bound to our love,

To make our lives look in their foreign sight

Fair, lest they speak us evil? By my head,

No Scot I hold him, but a strange man's knave,

Whose spirit is shrunk or swollen by their breaths.

Argyle. Well, let the votes be given, and each man's doom

Affirm if in his true and equal mind The charge be proven upon my lord, or no.

How go the voices?

Lindsay. By one-half their dooms The lords here of the jury speak him

With clear acquittal of bloodguilti-

One-half is voiceless.

Argyle. He then is proclaimed

Of this high court not guilty, and the charge

On trial stands not good against him.

The court upon this plea declares for you,

You are found free of blood. Bothwell. My noble lords,

Being proved thus in your judgments clear of crime,

Here on this door will I to-day set up My personal challenge in mine honor's right

To meet in arms, before what judge he

What gentleman soever undefamed Shall take upon him to confront my cause.

For their lewd mouths who threat, and wear no sword,

Your judgment given to acquit me shall abash

The malice it puts power into mine

With might of right to baffle. Sirs, good day.

[Exit with ORMISTON and his follow-

Argyle. Break up the court: the cause is judged.

Maxwell (to LINDSAY). Is judged? I know not of such seed what stem will spring,

But that fruit sour as gall and red as blood.

For men's false mouths must of this judgment grow.

I would I saw less surely than I see.

Scene VI. - The High Street.

BURGESSES and PEOPLE. First Citizen. What more of shame is laid up for us? when

Will Heaven put forth a hand to touch with fire

These naked sins, and shrivel? Have vou heard

What last lies bare for judgment? Second Citizen. Why, the last

Is not this half-hour's shame: each stroke each day

Strikes out a fresh one, that five minutes old

Dies of the next forgotten. Yesterday Some talk was of the challenge yet, which now

No man casts thought on, though by two good swords

Was battle proffered: by the stout Laird first

Of Tullibardine, in that brother's name Whom they for fear have taxed of treason, so

To eschew his proof and peril; he

The challenger to combat, and requires England and France for judges of the field

In person of their sovereigns; this refused,

On such new plea as craven craft may With his queen's leave the ambassador

himself Of England gladly with his own heart's will

Would take the personal cause upon him.

First Citizen. What!

Is it for fault of Scots to match and mate The pride in Bothwell swoln with inno-

cent blood None but Sir William Drury may be

Worth his sword's wrath that walks by night?

Third Citizen. Perchance

As for his queen he stands here deputy, And for our own her champion opposite, Afield with swords' play or abed with lips',

They hold the match more equal. Fourth Citizen. Nay, this news

Is gray of beard already; hear you not How by this priestly parliament of

That to beguile us and for no good-will

Hath in the queen's name passed its act to affirm

God's present gospel stablished in this realm,

The murderer lives now twice absolved of blood,

And has by voice of prelates and of earls

The assize allowed for good that purged him first,

And shall be loosened of his marriagebond

That twelve months since was tied?
his brother-in-law

Shall have again his forfeit lands, and see

His sister from her married bed thrust out,

And stir no finger; then without more stay

Who sees not where the adulterer's foot shall climb,

And by what head his own be pillowed?

These papers hung against our walls by night

Are tongues that prophesy but truth; ye saw

That likeness of a hare enringed with swords,

And of a mermaid crowned with burning eyes

Who drove the hounds off with a twothonged scourge

That coursed him trembling; and her hand indeed

Is found not slow to smite; a law now lives
Denouncing on his head no less than

Who shall set up, or seeing shall pluck

not down, Such placards writ: the first soe'er who

finds
And leaves the writing that defames

her friend To pass among the people, at her will

Shall lie in bonds; but if this brand herself,

Then must the man that spared it or

that set

Die; so the fire-eyed queen of shipwreck sings

Death in their ears who sail this dangerous sea

Whereon the ship reels of our staggering state,

And with the flame shot from her eyes puts out

The light of theirs that were as lightnings turned

On her hare-hearted lover.

Third Citizen. Yet they lack

The power with boast or menace to seal up

The lips of poor men; but three days ago
As she rode through the Grassmarket I

As she rode through the Grassmarket I heard

How from their stalls the women cried on her,

God save your grace! but with this added word

That smote the smile upon her lips to death,

If ye be spotless of the dead king's blood, Second Citizen. Such words and souls mount nigher God's ear and eye

Than theirs who lent this man their hands to slay

And tongues to purge him of their general sin, —

He of St. Andrew's, and his under priest,

Bishop of Ross, Leslies and Hamiltons, Whose lips are bloody, and that double soul

Argyle, that steers their faction; and this crew

Masked here as mouthpiece of the loathing land
Must hide the people's heart and true

men's truth
With craft of prattling prelates; yet

such mouths
As are unlocked and locked again with

gold

But gape till God shall pluck their

tongues out.

Fifth Citizen. Yea,

Ye hear but this, and have to burn your

No hotter news of these men, or what

bond Bears written broad and brave such names as these Of earls and bishops? this is strange yet, sirs,

That fires my cheek to tell you? Second Citizen. Why, men said

There was a knot that met of these to sup,

Shut in with Bothwell's hackbutters for guard,

That drew round Ainslie's Tavern, where they sat

Like a strait hoop of steel to bind them safe

And hold them fast from starting; and some bond

Of these his guests at Bothwell's prayer subscribed

There was that bound them to him, against all foes

That might impeach him of the crime discharged

By the open court's acquittal, from this day

To take his part upon them, and stand fast

As to their own cause, being made subject all

To slander and suspicion that but grows Of honor and high credit held with kings: So much we heard, and found not strange.

Fifth Citizen. Nay, this

Was but the grace that served their banquet in
Of meats as strong as poison; there

ensued
A pledge more mortal of a bond more

base;

Considering this time present, how the queen

Stood husbandless, and how the general weal

Might let her not long live so, should her mind

By thought of his true services be moved

To take the earl Bothwell to her loving lord,

They and each man there met of them should plight

His honor, truth, and heart's fidelity
To advance this marriage with all
furtherance given

Of counsel, satisfaction, and good help,

As soon as law might give it leave to be,

And as their common enemy should esteem

What man soever of evil will to them Might seek its hinderance; and to this were set

More than those names ye spake of; be it for fear,

For craft or vantage, none of these fell off

Save Eglinton that slipped for shame away,

And Morton with the secretary, that gave

Their voice yet for this marriage, but would seal

No general bond of service on his side Save these, no priest or peer of then but lives

His servant pledged; their hands, tongues, counsels, hearts,

His or not theirs, and all they man sworn men.

Third Citizen. I have assurance of a true man's faith,

That word was writ of this confederacy To the English council from the Laird of Grange,

Desiring knowledge with what ear their queen

Shall take these tidings; and albeit of late,
In all our trouble being found slow to

help
She hath lost the love here borne her,

if her grace
For this late murder will pursue re-

venge, She shall win all the hearts of all the

best
Again, he says, in Scotland; who should

With her good help and favor, swift to take

This vengeance on them, and redeem from fear

Their prince's life now trembling in the reach

of hands that slew his father; for our

Hath sworn she cares not for her lover's sake

To lose France, England, and her natural land,

And would go with him to the wild world's end,

Stript to her smock, ere leave him. Second Citizen. Has he writ

So much to the English court of her?

being ours,
He should let shame keep silence of
her shame.

First Citizen. What shame or silence can shut up for shame

That which at noon walks clamorous of itself

of itself
And boastful to be naked? They will

Though thunder sound forth sin, and while God speaks

Will kiss in sight of lightning.

Fourth Citizen. Was there not
Some noise of strife arisen for fault of

pay
Among their crew of Bothwell's villains

here
That hold by force of hand the palace

That hold by force of hand the palace gates?

Second Citizen. Such rumor was, for certain; and himself

Strode in among the middle mutiny Like a thieves' captain, and being braved of them

Caught by the throat one that was lord o' the brawl,

And would have slain but for the throng that cried And drove upon him shouting, till for

fear
He was even fain to stop with promises
Their mouths who clampered: which to

Their mouths who clamored; which to see fulfilled Needs must be sit no lower than doth

a king.

Third Citizen. So then the gates are open, and the queen

By leave of these her guards, and him their chief,

May part in peace for Stirling now to

Her son in ward there of the castellan? Where we, God knows, may give him thanks that one

So wise as the earl of Mar and stout of heart Hath our born king in covert, who might sleep

On that sweet breast that bore him not so safe

As in a hand so honest.

First Citizen. Ay, God help,

There is no surety in such housekeeping

As thunder comes forth of the sky by night

To fall upon and burn it, yet no storm Save of men's making seen, nor fire in heaven

Save what rose up from under. Verily, Our good lord Bothwell spake but truth, who said

To good James Melville, how so strange a thing

On earth was never known of: pity 'tis He could not come to look upon the corpse,

Though Bothwell bade him, seeing it was removed;

It was his hapless chance to find it gone

And in safe keeping of some secret hand That waited on it living; such things

are:
The worse hap his. They say it had

no wound;
So if by some mischance, as God forbid,

The prince were reft unluckily of life, I think he should have none for eye to

That might read evil.

Third Citizen. Who shall ride with her?

Second Citizen. Why, no great train, lest being within the walls

She take the child into her hand, and give

For better care to Bothwell's, with the

That keep this castle too; but yet I

His hand nor hers shall put God's judgment back

That waits to take them triumphing, and turn

To tears their laughter and our grief to joy.

Scene VII. - STIRLING CASTLE. The QUEEN and HUNTLEY.

Queen. Will you go back from us? Huntley. I like it not;

I do not see how this may be made

Queen. There is no flaw but in your fainter heart;

The way is fair and even; I cannot think

What seed is in men's hearts that brings forth fear

Out of all season. Why are you so sad?

The thing is no more dangerous than it

When our first plot was laid; nay, so much less

By how much these are ours whose names and bonds

Speak on our side inscribed. Huntley. Madam, not so;

The earl of Sutherland, whose forfeit-

Your grace but now remitted with mine now,

When we shall meet my brother's men in arms,

Will die before he yield you to their hands.

Queen. My lord, you have no brother of him now

That was your sister's husband. I will

To bid him bring up men enough to out-match

All that ride with us homeward, and so

That none the hardiest shall but think on fight.

Three hundred hath your earl? then in his rank

There shall be more than of our company,

That I to spare men's blood may yield myself.

Huntley. It is too gross and foolishly devised:

When I spake last with him, he laid on

meet and when.

And what should by contrivance plead for me,

To save my name though you be yielded

Who ride with me for escort; all this charge

He lays on you, and bids me write again

What you shall say by letter; of him-

He moves not yet; and I beseech you think,

Before you move him, in what enterprise You put to pledge your honor, that can

With honor wed him who being wedded

By force and violent hand hath borne you off;

Nor will my folk endure it, I wot well, But it must come to trial by hap of fight

With doubt and accident of answering arms:

Where, if we fail on our part, then on Shall be the blame and bloody note of

Made on your personal guard; but if we

That ride with you as followers, then

is he The most forlorn of nien revolted;

else. I shall be called of all that sin on earth

The most unthankful traitor, who being But newly of your grace remade your

man

Shall yield you up by treason without blows

Into a rebel's handling; and the lord's, I doubt, when they shall see you in his hold,

Will think not much to unswear their oaths, denv

Their words and hands as given through force or fear,

And signed not of their hearts; I pray, think of it,

The charge to say where we should And take some other counsel to your mind.

Queen. My lord, if you bear back my word to him,

It shall be this: that, seeing I am come so far,

If of his own will he withdraw him not,

For no persuasion nor for death itself Will I be brought to break my faith

with him.

For this you say of them that follow

And of your fear to bear a thankless

For my supposed betraying, you should by now

With him have taken counsel of the chance,

And not have thrown it here across my

Who have no choice to pass not over it, Seeing I may turn not back for life or death,

For fear or shame or love of any man.

As for the place, he doth not well to

cast

On me too even the election: let him choose,

And send me word, with pardon that

I tax my lord of too much negligence. For those your followers whom you most misdoubt,

You shall be wise to weed our train of them

If any wise mean be to draw them forth.

This is my counsel, of a simple wit And womanish, but not so vile at heart As to go back for danger from its faith. I pray you so report of me, and say,

When he shall ask you of my mind again,

No more but this word only: and farewell. [Exit HUNTLEY. This faint-heart honesty with half a

hand
Is falser found at need than falsehood's

self,
And ever was of me more hated. Oh,
That I might take these hours as in my

And men that yet divide us, with one grasp

To gripe them dead and pluck his fang from time

That waits to fasten on us unawares

And make love mortal with the kiss that kills!

A day and night are as a long life's length

That part the hungering from the perfect hour,

The void from the fulfilling. - Nay, come in.

Enter MARY BEATON and PARIS.

Mary Beaton. Here waits my lord of
Bothwell's messenger

To bear your word back of Lord Huntley's mind.

Queen. Ay, that I found it trustless.
Tell my lord

He makes me mad to put his faith in him

And to mistrust that which is wholly his,

Even her true heart to whom he should have sent

Word every day what she should do for him,

And hath done nothing of it. I did say

He should take heed of that false brother-in-law,

Of whom his negligence and heedless faith

Have put us in the danger; on my part There has lacked nothing toward the work in hand,

And had he not more changed his mind than I

Since I went from him, he should need not now

By stranger's lips inquire of my resolve. Say how you see me, and till he send me word

That I will here lie sick, as God he knows

What health I have at heart. Would I were dead,

For all I see goes ill; but tell your lord

This was not in his promise that I find, Nor no such matter; but he lets me

What power has absence on him, to

His hand has yet another string than mine.

And look you warn him of this brother-

in-law

That he hath babbled of our enterprise Wherein he puts but forth a heartless hand.

And in what great men's ears he well may guess

Who knows which most are dangerous; vet methinks

If still we have need to flatter them, so

Might naturally be pleaded on his part, That his good service and long amity Might well deserve his pardon and

their love

If past a subject's duty he put forth, Not to constrain me, but assure himself Of such place nigh me that no foreign tongue

May by strange counsel hinder my con-

To that whereto he trusts his service

Make him one day to attain; with such excuse

Shall he persuade them that he stands compelled

To make pursuit against his enemies: And he may find fair words at will to

To Maitland most of all, through whose keen tongue

We hold the rest by the ear; but if at The deed of our device mislike him

Let him send word, and leave not on my

head The blame of all; and if it like him

yet, Say I beseech him for the honor of

To come with no less force accompanied

Than of three hundred men; rather with more,

For that is all the main part of my

Seeing as for Huntley, I assure myself Te in our play shall henceforth bear no part

But of an honest and a fearful man Whose thought and all his toil of heart

To keep the load of treason from his

Therefore I would not have my lord in

Trust or mistrust him, but be circum-

And take more power unto him.

Paris. So shall I say;

Your highness hath no message more for me?

Queen. God wot no time it is for us to change

Tokens and toys of love; yet I would send.

For very sorrow, something but in sign

That of my heart's grief I accuse not him For his cold writing or forgetfulness,

His little memory of me and little care, And least of all his promise-breach, being now

So far made his that what thing pleases

Is acceptable to me, and all my thoughts To his so willingly subdued, that all That comes of him proceeds of no

such root.

In mine esteem, as loveless negligence Nor any love's lack, but such only cause

As I desire, being just and reasonable, Which is the final order he should take

For his own surety and honor, who alone

Is my life's stay for which I only will I'reserve it, and without which in this

world My soul desires not but a sudden death. Bear therefore to him, for testimony of

How lowly I submit me to his law In sign of homage this that I take off

Of my head's ornament, which is the chief

And guide of other members, as to say How being possessed of that as of a spoil

Which is the principal, he needs must

The remnant subject to him with heart's consent.

And for that heart, that seeing I have left it him

Long since I have not now in hand to give,

This stone instead I send him, painted black

And sown with tears and bones, a sepulchre

Whereto my heart is likened, being as it

Carved like a tomb or certain recep-

Γο harbor his commandments in, and hold

More fast than all his memory and his name

Therein enclosed as in the ring my hair,

To come forth never till the grant of death

Shall let him rear a trophy of my bones.

As is the ring full of them, set therein For sign he has made full conquest of my heart,

That even the bones must be to him bequeathed

For memory of his victory and my loss That was so sweet to me: tell him but this.

And say that by the enamelling of black He shall discern her steadfastness who sends

And by the tears my fears innumerable Lest I displease him, and those tears I shed

For his dear absence and for heart's disdain

That I may not in outward shape be

As with full strength and heart and spirit I am,

And with good cause; for were my

Than hers of all born ever for men's love

Found worthiest and most perfect, and as much

As I desire it might be in his eye, Well might I so rest ever, and shall

Well might I so rest ever, and shall strive

Still to maintain me in his government As worthily as I may. Say, I beseech

That is mine only good, in as good part To take it at my hand as I at his

With extreme joy received our marriage bond,

That till the marriage of our bodies be Made publicly shall part not from my breast.

Which keeps it now in sign of all the bliss

I can or hope for or desire on earth: And that my letter here brake off for

dread
Lest this as much should weary him to

Lest this as much should weary him to read

As I took joy to write it; therefore, say,

Here did I set a kiss as on his hand

With such devotion as I pray to God
To give him long and blessed life, and
me

That only good of all which I desire
And only may pretend to in the world,
His love and his good favor who doth
hold

Alone my life up; and this trust I showed

To you in whom I know the trust he hath

As I shall for his sake whose wife I

His humble and obedient lawful wife, To whom my heart and body are dedicate

And shall in no wise unto death be changed

Nor good nor evil make me go from it. So tell him, and despatch.

[Exit Paris. What said Lord Mar

Touching the child's charge to you?

Mary Beaton. But thus much:
That he would never let it from his hand

Save with assent of the three several states.

And on condition there shall be pro-

Some honest lord and worthy such a charge

As captain of the castle of Edinburgh,

Where only may the prince, he says, lie safe

From them that slew his father.

Queen. Ay, so brave?

There speaks a man of trust, found honorable.

I had as lief be dead as see such men Stand so at point to thwart me: by my life,

I hold it not a straw's worth in the scale
If I must live so shackled. What! and
now.

When my life trembles on the top of fate, And all my days hang from this edge of time

'Twixt night and light suspended,

whence one hour

May hurl all hopes down breathless to the pit,

And cast me broken at the mountain's foot,

Or set me sure and steadfast in the sun, To be so crossed of cozening honesties, And honors made of craft, and fraudu-

lent faith, Would spur a blood more sluggish than

my sleep

And prick a drowsier passion. Well, let be:

Our time will come to take all these in hand.

What may doubt deem, then, I would do with him,

That am his mother? Nay, I know their thought:

It is their fear and hatred of my lord That glares askant on me; and the child's self,

I think, as little loves me as he need, Knowing in what love I held his father. Come,

I will yet see, before I take my leave, If there be such a nature in our blood As can command and change the spiritual springs

And motions of our thought, advance or check

The pulse of purpose in the sour that moves

Our longings and our loathings to their end

By mere control and force unreasonable Of motiveless compulsion; if such blind

And sensual chances of the stirring veins

That feed the heart of child or mother may

Divert and dull the mind's design, or turn

The conscience and the current of the

From its full course and action. I believe.

Albeit I would not hurt the life I bare, Nor shed its blood, it is not possible

Such love should live between my child and me,

Who know what source he came of

Who know what source he came of more than mine,

And how that part of me once mixed therewith

Was sullied thence and shamed in mine own sight,

That loathes to look upon it, yet must see

In flesh and blood the record writ and sealed

As oft as I behold him: and you saw
He would not lie within mine arm, nor
kiss,

But like a fox-cub scratched and strove, to be

Free of my hands again.

Mary Beaton. I see no need

In heaven or earth why you should love him.

Queen. No?

They say such law there is to enforce such love

On either part: I know not; but I think

Love should but flower from seed of love, and this

Was but a tare sown timeless and in hate;

Yet so much am I mother in my mind, That, be it for love or loathing, from my heart,

When I perforce commend him to that care

Which will not yield him naturally to mine,

Fain would I parting know if soon or

Mine eyes shall turn upon that face again

Which out of me was moulded, and take note,

When each on each looks equal-eyed, and sees

His crown a shadow that makes mine a shade,

What king must this be, and what queen shall I.

Scene VIII. — Dunbar. A Room in the Castle.

MAITLAND and SIR JAMES MELVILLE.

Melville. What, have you seen them since we came from horse?

How looks she now?

Maitland. Disquieted and strange; And he so hot and high of mood, I

think
We have no safeguard from him but in

And Huntley that at Stirling spake with

Of this their counsel, and must now suspect

It was by me discovered to the lords, Will turn perforce his fear of Bothwell's wrath

Into a sword to strike as straight as he Even at my life, it may be; which her

Shall easilier from fear of them redeem Than her own fame from evidence of men.

That seeing her prisoner see too if she came

By force or no, and led by heart or hand,

To bonds indeed or freedom. *Melville*. Nay, myself

Was warned of him that rode in charge of me, —

The laird here of Blackadder, - how lord

Was of our lady's counsel; and but now As they rode in I heard him swear, and laugh,

Who would soe'er or would not, in their spite,

Yea, though herself she would not with her will,

Yet should the queen perforce now wed with him.

Maitland. The deed has flushed his brain and blood like wine:

He is wroth and merry at once, as a man mad.

There will no good come of it. *Melville*. Surely, sir,

Of such loose crafts there cannot: all this land

Will cry more loud upon her than on him

If she be known consenting.

Maitland. If she be!

How shall not all ears know it on earth that hear?

But two miles out of Edinburgh, at noon,

Accompanied of all her guard and us, She, meeting in mid-road at Almond Bridge,

The unthought-on Bothwell at his horsetroop's head,

Who with twelve men lays hand upon her rein,

Yields herself to him for fear our blood be spilt,

Or theirs or ours, for tenderness of heart

Submits her to his violent masterdom, Forbids our swords, ties up all hands with words,

And doglike follows hither at his hand For pure surprise and suddenness of fear

That plucks the heart out of resistance; then,

Riding beneath the south wall of the town,

On show of summons to the castle sent For help of us enforced thus of our foes,

We get but fire of guns charged full of sound

With hay stuffed in for powder; and God knows

Balfour knew naught of this, the gov-

ernor, Who was forewarned not first of their

design, How by no means to cross but further

With forecast of his office; nay, all this Was undevised, and on the sudden wrought

To take her by swift stroke of simple hand;

And so astonied were we all, and so The castellan, and most of all the

Why, though the world be drunk with faith in lies,

Shall God make this too gospel? From this day

Shall she begin her ruin; with rent heart

I see the ways wherethrough her life shall lie,

And to what end; for never henceforth

shall she get good or comfort of men's

Nor power nor honor that a queen should have.

Nor hap nor hope renewed in all her days.

She has killed herself to take her kingdom off,

And give into strange keeping.

Enter the QUEEN, BOTHWELL, and

HUNTLEY.

Bothwell. Here he stands,—
This was the knave that was to baffle

me: He shall die here.

Huntley. I will not lose the part
My sword should have in him: this
hour and hand

Shall cut off craft and danger. Stand, and die.

Maitland. Is it the queen's will that pursues my life?

Then let it strike, and end. Queen. I charge you, hold!

I will not foully twice be forced of men
To stand and stain mine eyes with
sight of blood

Shed of a friend, and guiltless. Hold, I say!

Bothwell. Stand by, for I will slay him.

Queen. Slay me, then,

For I will fling my body on their points Before your swords shall find him. Hark you, sir, [To HUNTLEY.

Whose father died my traitor in my sight:

If one hair perish of my servant's head,

You that had back your lands and goods but now

Again shall lose them with your forfeit life

For boot of this man's blood.

Bothwell. Woman, give way!

Queen. Give all your swords way
toward me; let me bleed

Ere this my friend that has been true to me:

I swear he shall not.

Maitland. Madam, for God's love, Come you not in their peril; I am armed.

If both not run upon me. Bothwell. Fool, I say,

Give place, or I shall know not what I do;

Make me not mad.

Queen. I cannot fear you yet.

Will you strike now?

Bothwell. I should but do you right. Why thrust you in between me and this

Whom your heart knows for traitor, and whose tongue

Crossed and betrayed our counsel to the lords?

Had he his will, we should not stand to-day

Here heart to heart, but you in ward of them,

And I divided from you. Queen. My sweet lord,

Let not your wrath confound my happiness;

Stain not my fair and fortunate hour with blood

Shed of a good man who shall serve us yet.

It shall more help to have him live our friend

Than fifty-fold slain of our enemies.

Bothwell. Have your will's way: he cannot cross us now;

I care not if he live.

Maitland. I am bounden to you For so much grace.

Queen. Vex not his mood again.
To-morrow shall all friends be recon-

To-morrow shall all friends be reconciled;
To-night rest here in surety.

Bothwell. Be it so. [Exeunt

SCENE IX. - THE SAME.

The QUEEN, BOTHWELL, and the ARCH-BISHOP of ST. ANDREW'S.

Queen. What counsel, father? if their league be made
So soon and strong at Stirling, we had

need sti

Surely by this be fast in Edinburgh.

We have sent thither freely as our friends

Lord Huntley and James Melville, who were here

As in our ward, not prisoners; every

Here lingering makes our enemies bitterer-tongued

And our strange state more hazardous; myself

More taxed for willing bondage, or my

For violence done upon me.

Archbishop. In my mind,
There is no mean of policy now but speed,

Nor surety but short counsel and stout heart.

The lords at Stirling, while you put off time,

Athol and Mar, and Morton with Argyle,

Are sworn to crown the prince, and of his name

Make to their cause a standard, if you cleave

Still to my lord here, from whose violent hand

With your own leave they fain would pluck you forth, And keep your honor hurtless; but

they see
You will have no deliverance at their

hands From him who, as they say, doth boast

himself,

If he may get your child once in his ward,

To warrant him forever in good time From all revenging of his father's death.

Nay, it is bruited of them all about

How you at parting would have given the boy An apple poisoned, which he put away, And dogs that ate it after swelled and died.

Bothwell. The devil is in their lips had I free way,

Fire should seal up and sear them.

Archbishop. So they talk;

The very children's tongues are hot on you,

And in their plays your shadowy action staged And phantoms raised of your presented

deed:

Boys that in Stirling streets had made their game

To act again the slaying of Darnley, so Were rapt with passion of the pastime feigned

They well-nigh slew the player that took on him

Your part, my lord, as murderer, and came off

Half hanged indeed and breathless; this I hear,

And more much weightier daily from that part

Pointing the same way on you; sure it is,
From France and England messengers

desire
To have the prince delivered to their

charge As to be fostered for his surety's sake Of one or other, safelier so bestowed

In foreign harborage of a stranger court

Than at the rough breast of his natural land;

Such offer comes there of Elizabeth To those unquiet lords, but other aid They must of her not look for to their part

Who stand against their sovereign. Now, since these

Are dangers evident, and every day Puts more in them of dangerous, best

it were,
I think, to meet them warlike point to

point,

Your hands and powers made one, and multiplied

By mutual force and faith; or you must part,

And each lose other, and yet be neither saved.

Or presently with one sole face confront The many-mouthed new menace of the time.

With divers heads deformed of enmi-

That roar and ravin in the night of

Made dim with factions; only majesty, With light of bared and kindled brows and eyes,

Can face them to consume; do you but

Your soul as high as is your crown, and power

As plain as is your cause, you shall enforce.

By resolution and a forthright will,

The obedience and the allowance of these men

That would constrain you by the fear of them

Within the limit of their leave. I say, Proclaim at once the fore-ordained divorce

Between his sometime lady and my lord,

And hard thereon your marriage, as compelled

By perilous instance of necessity

At once to assure you of a husband's And present strength in this your need,

who stand Fenceless and forceless with no man

for stay. And could desire none truer and wor-

thier trust Than him whose service done and val-

iant name May warrant your remission of such

As men lay on him for the seeming

With which unwillingly he stood constrained

To save you even for love's sake from their hands,

Whence, had not he redeemed you as

by might,

They had done you worse wrong than he seemed to do.

This shall excuse the speed that you

And leave their hands no time to rise that would

Prevent you, being unmarried; and your own,

Forestalling them, shall take again and steer

The helm of this land's general weal, else left

To their cross guidance and false pilot-

Bothwell. By God, well said and counselled.

Queen. All is well,

Or shall, if but one thing be; and in

That lies alone of all men. Nay, you know it:

Wrong me not now to ask. Bothwell. Wrong you not me,

To cross my wit with riddles, which you know

From no man's lips I love. Queen. I know not yet

If there be naught on any lips that live Save mine that you love better: I can

Too little of your likings. Bothwell. Be not wroth

That thus much of them I desire you

And set your heart to it, once being schooled. Fair queen,

These are no chambering times, nor sit we here

To sing love's catches counter-changed with words

That cross and break in kisses: what you will,

Be swift to speak, or silent. Queen. What I will?

I will be sure there hangs about your

No thought that bound it once to one cut off

And yet may feed it with desire to share What is my treasure and my right to have

With her most undeserving; which in

Were more than Jason's falsehood was, that gave

To his new wife such vantage of his old As you give her of me, whose narrower

Holds not a third part of the faith and

love

That my obedience bears you, though she wear

Against my will such vantage in your

sight, By my hard hap; yet would I think

not so. Nor liken you to such a trustless man

And miserable as he was, nor myself To one so wronged a woman, and being

wronged

In suffering so unpitiful as she.

Yet you put in me somewhat of her kind

That makes me like unto her in any thing

That touches you or may preserve you

mine

To whom alone you appertain, if that May be called mine by right appropriated

Which should be won through faithful travail, yea,

'Through only loving of you as God knows

I do and shall do all my days of life For pain or evil that can come thereof: In recompense of which, and all those

You have been cause of to me, and must think

That I esteem no evils for your sake, Let not this woman with her heartless

Nor piteous passion thrust me out of

Who should sit sole and secret in your

What hath she borne, or I not borne, for you,

And would not bear again? or by what

Have I set store or spared it that might

To buy your heart's love to me? Have I found

Empire, or love of friends, or pride, or peace,

Or honor, or safe life, or innocence,

Too good things to put from me; or men's wrath. Terror or shame or hatred of mine

own, Or breach of friends, or kingdom's

wreck, or sin, Too fearful things to embrace and make

them mine With as good will and joyous height of

heart As hers who takes love in her prosper-

ous arms And has delight to bridegroom? Have

I not Loved all these for your sake? and

those good things,

Have I not all abhorred them? Would I keep

One comfort or one harbor or one hope, One ransom, one resource, one restingplace,

That might divide me from your dan ger, save

This head whose crown is humbled at your foot

storm that smote on yours? Would I sleep warm

Out of the wind's way when your sail was set

By night against the sea-breach! Would I wait

As might your wife to hear of you, how went

The day that saw your battle, and hold Till the cry came of fallen or conquer.

ing men To bid me mourn or triumph? Kath

my heart Place for one good thought bred not of

your good,

Or ill thought not depending on your

What hath she done, that yours hath place for her.

Or time or thought or pity? Bothwell. What have I,

That yours should fix on her untimely? Nav.

Last year she was my wife, and moved you not;

And now she is turned forth naked of that name,

And stripped as 'twere to clothe you, comes this heat,

And fear takes fire lest she turn back, or I

To thrust you forth instead: you are fair and fool

Beyond all queens and women.

Queen. There spake truth,

For then you said, most loving. But indeed

This irks me yet, this galls with doubt and fear,

That even her plea to be divorced from

On some forepast adulterous charge, — which proved

She wins her asking, — leaves your hand not loose

By law to wed again, but your same

Frees her from you, and fetters you from me.

Then stand we shamed and profitless:

God's very hand can loose not us and

Who binds and looses; though Buc-

cleuch make oath
She was contracted to you first, and

No righteous marriage; though she plight her soul

As she made proffer for our hope's sake; yea,

Though you should bring a hundred loves to swear

They had the firstlings of your faith, who kept

No faith with any, nor will keep with me,

God knows, and I, that have no warrant yet

In my lord's word here which unweds you, being

Matched with your cousin in the fourth degree,

And no proof published if the Church's grace

Were granted for it, or sought; no help of this,

If your love give not warrant; and therein

If she hath half or I have less than all,

Then have I nothing of you. — Speak to him:

Bid him not break his faith, not this now mine;

Plead for me with him, father, lest he lie,

And I too lose him: God shall pardon, say,

What sin we do for love, or what for wrath,

Or to defend us from the danger of men,

But to me, — me, say, if he be forsworn, That God shall forgive it him, nor I.

Archbishop. Be not too careful to confound yourself.

Those bonds are broken by God's leave and law:

Make no fresh bonds of your own fears, to do

What harm these do no more; he hath put her off:

Rest there content.

Queen. Nay, why should I then trust He shall not put off me in heart for her?

Bothwell. Why, have your choice then, and mistrust: God's death! I had deemed I had learnt of women's witlessness

Some little learning, yet I thought no

Than that it was but light as air, snow, foam,

And all things light, not lighter. I would know

What men hold foolish yet that hold you wise,

If not your fear. *Queen*. Doth she not love you?

Bothwell. Ay.

Queen. But I know

Queen. Hath she not cause to hate, and doth not hate,

Who sues to be put from you, for your fault

Craves leave to be cut off, as I crave leave

To take you from her hands, her gift?

Bothwell. God knows: She may love, hate, or hate not neither

Or both alike: I know not.

That you can love not. Nay, then help me, God!

If I did know this, I would kill myself. Yet to more proof I would I had put your heart,

Ere I gave up to it all the might of

Which is but feebleness. Well, we will go;

There is no better counsel. Pardon me If my fear seem to wrangle with my faith:

They are parts but of my love, that with itself

Strives to be master of its grief and

Lest either overbear it, and therewith Put out my life. Come: all things shall be well.

SCENE X. - HOLYROOD.

Enter HERRIES and SIR JAMES MEL-

Herries. Is the work done?

Melville. They are wedded fast; and now

I think would one of them to free herself

Give the right hand she hath given him. Herries. What, so soon?

Came she as loath into the council-hall, Or were her answers as compelled and strange?

Melville. I have not seen for any chance till now

So changed a woman in the face as she, Saving with extreme sickness. She was wed

In her old mourning habits, and her face

As deadly as were they; the soft warm joy

That laughed in its fair feature, and put heart

In the eyes and gracious lips as to salute

All others' eyes with sweet regardfulness,

Looked as when winds have worn the white-rose leaf;
No fire between her cyclids, and no

flower

In the April of her cheeks; their spring a-cold,

And but for want of very heart to weep They had been rainier than they were forlorn.

Herries. And his new grace of Orkney?

Melville. The good duke

Was dumb while Adam Bothwell with grave lips

Set forth the scandal of his lewd life past

And fair faith of his present penitence. Whose days to come being higher than his past place

Should expiate those gone by, and their good works

Atone those evil: hardly twitched his eye.

Or twinkled half his thick lip's curve of hair,

Listening; but when the bishop made indeed

His large hard hand with hers so flowerlike fast,

He seemed as 'twere for pride and mighty heart

To swell and shipe with passion and

To swell and shine with passion, and his eye

To take into the fire of its red look All dangers and all adverse things that

might
Rise out of days unrisen, to burn them

With its great heat of triumph; and the hand

Fastening on hers so griped it that her lips

Trambled and turned to catch the

Trembled, and turned to catch the smile from his,

As though her spirit had put its own life off,

And sense of joy or property of pain, To close with his alone; but this twin

Was briefer than a flash or gust that strikes

And is not; for the next word was not said

Ere her face waned again to winter

As a moon smitten, and her answer

As words from dead men wickedly wrung forth

By craft of wizards, forged and forceful

breath

Which hangs on lips that loathe it. Herries. Will you think

This was not haply but for show, to

The likeness as of one not all con-

Nor all consenting, willingly enforced To do her will as of necessity?

To do her will as of necessity? That she might seem no part yet of his

But as compelled by counsel of those

Who since her coming have subscribed

by name
The paper of advice that in his cause

Declares what force of friends has
Bothwell here

In Lothian and on all the border's march

To keep good order, and how well it were She should for surety wed him whom

she needs
Must wed for honor, or perforce live

shamed By violence done upon her.

Melville. No: there hung Too much of fear and passion on her

To be put off when time shall be to

The fire that moved her, and the mounting will,

While danger was and battle was to be, Now she hath leapt into the pit alive

To win and wear the diamond, are no more:

Hope feels the wounds upon its hands and feet

That clomb and clung, now halting since the hour

That should have crowned has bruised it. No, 'tis truth:

She is heart-struck now, and labors with herself,

As one that loves, and trusts not but the man

Who makes so little of men's hate may make

Of women's love as little; with this doubt

New-born within her, fears that slept awake,

And shame's eyes open that were shut for love.

To see on earth all pity hurt to death

By her own hand, and no man's face her friend

If his be none for whom she casts them off,

And finds no strength against him in their hands.

Herries. Small strength indeed, or help of craft or force,

Must she now look for of them; and shall find,

I fear, no stay against men's spirits and tongues,

Nor shelter in the observance of their will

That she puts on, submitting her own faith

To the outward face of theirs, as in this act

Of marriage, and the judgment now enforced

Against the allowance of the mass, albeit

With a bruised heart and loathing did she bow That royal head and hand imperious

once To give so much of her soul's trust

away; And little shall it stead her.

Melville. So fear I:

'Tis not the warrant of an act affirmed Against the remnants of her faith, nor form

Of this strange wedlock, shall renew to

Men's outworn love and service; nay, and strife

Lies closer to her than fears from outward: these

Whose swords and souls attend on her new lord,

Both now for fault of pay grown mutinous.

From flat revolt they hardly have redeemed

With the queen's jewels and that English gift Of the gold font sent hither for the prince,

That served him not for christening, melted now

To feed base hands with gold, and stop loud throats,

Whose strength alone and clamor put such heart

In Bothwell, that he swore to hang the man

Who would not speak their banns at first, and now

But utters them with lips that yet protest

test
Of innocent blood and of adulterous
bonds

By force proclaimed, and fraudful; and this Craig

The townsmen love, and heed not that

Each day will Bothwell hear men preach, and show

To them that speak all favor, and will sit

A guest at burghers' boards unsummoned; yet

Men's hate more swells against him, to behold

How by the queen he rides unbonneted, And she rebukes his too much courtesy; So that their world within doors and without

Swells round them doubtfully toward storm, and sees

This hot-brained helmsman in his own conceit

Even here in port, who drifts indeed at sea.

Herries. Short time will wind this up: the secretary,

Whose blood the queen would see not shed of him,

Is slipped away for Stirling, there to join With Lindsay and the lords ere this combined,

From whom I may not now divide myself.

On the child's party. Not a hand will stay

Nor heart upon this side; the Hamiltons,

For their own ends that set this marriage on,

Will for those ends with no sad hearts behold

At others' hands her imminent overthrow.

Melville. This was the archbishop's counsel, that annulled ast year's true marriage to procure the

Last year's true marriage to procure the queen's,

And even therein betray her. God mend all!

But I misdoubt me lest the sun be set
That looked upon the last of her good
days.

## SCENE XI. - THE SAME.

The Queen and Bothwell; Mary Beaton and Arthur Erskine in attendance.

Queen. Are you yet wroth?

Bothwell. Are you yet wise? to know If I be wroth, should less import than this

Which I would fain find of you.

Queen. By my life,

I think I am but wise enough to know That witless I was ever.

Bothwell. Ay, but most,

You mean, to wed me, that am graceless more

Than witless you that wedded, in men's eyes

Who justliest judge of either; yet, by God,

Had I not grace enough to match with you,

I must have less than in their minds
I have

And tongues of them that curse me. But what grief

Wrings now your heart or whets your tongue, that strikes

When the heart stirs not? Queen. Nay, no grief it is

To be cut off from all men's company, Watched like a thief lest he break ward by night,

My chamber-door set round with men at-arms,

My steps and looks espied on, hands

Fettered as 'twere with glances of strange eyes

That guard me lest I stray; my ways, my words,

My very sleep, their subject. Bothwell. You were wont

To walk more free; I wot you have seen fair days

When you lived large i' the sun, and had sweet tongues

To sing with yours, and haply lips and eyes

To make song sweeter than the lute may: now

'Tis hard that you sit here my woful wife,

Who use you thus despitefully, that yet

Was never queen so mated with a groom

And so mishandled: have you said so?

Oueen, I?

Bothwell. Who hath put these words else in men's mouths, that prate How you lie fast in prison? I did know

A woman's tongue keen as her faith was light,

But faith so like the wind spake never yet

With tongue so like a sword's point.

Queen. No, my lord?

Tis well that I should hear so first of you,

Who best may know the truth of your worst word.

Bothwell. Is it no truth that men so speak, and you,
By speech or silence or by change of

face, By piteous eyes or angry, give them

To babble of your bonds? What

grace you show Toward others is as doubt and hate of

In these our enemies' sight, who see it, and swear

You are kept in ward here of my will, and made,

Out of no trust or love but force and fear.

Thrall to my hand. Why, being but two days wed,

Must there be cause between us of dispute

For such a thing as this man, in whose name

I am crossed and slighted of your wanton will?

Queen. If he be worth no more than you conceive,

What grace I do him can hurt you?

Bothwell. I conceive!

Why, what worth is he with you, that I should

Conceive the least thought of him? Were I hurt,

Assure yourself it would be to his death:

Lay that much to your heart. Queen. My heart is killed.

I have not where to lay it.

Bothwell. Pray you, no tears.

I have seen you weep when dead men were alive,

That for your eye-drops wept their hearts' blood out:

So will not I. You have done me fool ish wrong,
And haply cast your fame for food to

hounds
Whose teeth will strip it hour by hour

more bare Whereon they have gnawed before.

Queen. What have I done? Speak.

Bothwell. Nay, I will, because you know not. Hark:
You are even too simple and harmless;

being man's wife, Not now the first time, you should buy

more wit
Though with less innocence; you have

given a gift,
Out of your maiden singleness of soul
And eye most witless of misconstruing

eyes, Where you should not: this is strange

truth to you, But truth, God help us! that man's

horse who was
Your husband, and whose chattels,

place, and name
Lie in my hold I think now lawfully,

Whence none is like to wring them, have you given

Out of my hand to one of whom fame saith

That by the witness of a north-land witch

He when I die must wed you, and my

Shall last not half a year; for in your

Must lie two husbands after me, and

Shall in your fifth lord's lifetime die by

Now, being but third and least in worth of these,

I would not have you die so red a death, But keep you from all fresh or fiercer heat

Than of my lips and arms; for which things' sake

I am not blithe, so please you, to behold How straight this lay lord abbot of Arbroath

Sits in your husband's saddle. Pardon

That with my jealous knowledge I confound

Your virginal sweet ignorance of men's minds.

Ill thoughts and tongues unmannerly, that strike

At the pure heart which dreams not on such harm:

It is my love and care of your life's peace

Makes me thus venturous to wage words with you,

And put such troublous things in your fair mind.

Whereof God wot you knew not; and to end,

Take this much of me: live what life you may, Or die what death, while I have part

in you, None shall have part with me; nor

touch nor word, Nor eye nor hand, nor writing, nor one

thought, The lightest that may hang upon a look,

Shall man get of you that I know not

And answer not upon him. Be you

flesh

As royal-blooded husbands; being no king,

Nor kin of kings, but one that keep unarmed

My head but with my hand, and have no wit

To twitch you strings, and match you rhyme for rhyme,

And turn and twitter on a tripping tongue,

But so much wit to make my word and sword

Keep time and rhyme together, say and

Set this down in such record as you list, But keep it surer than you keep your mind

If that be changing; for by heaven and

I swear to keep the word I give you fast

As faith can hold it, that who thwarts me here,

Or comes across my will's way in my wife's.

Dies as a dog dies, doomless. Now, your pleasure:

I prate no more.

Queen. Shall I be handled thus? Bothwell. You have too much been handled otherwise:

Now will I keep you from men's hands in mine.

Or lack the use of these. Oucen. What, to strike me?

You shall not need: give me a knife to strike.

That I may let my life out in his eye, Or I will drown myself.

Bothwell. Why, choose again:

I cross you not.

Queen. Give me a knife, I say. Arthur Erskine. Make not our hearts bleed, madam, as they burn

To hear what we hear silent.

Bothwell. Comfort her:

You were her chamber-knight on David's day.

Arthur Erskine. My lord, the reverence that the queen's sight bears,

I am not of such fool's mould cast in And awe toward her, make me thus slow to set

My hand to do what work my heart bids; else

I would not doubt to stand before your grace.

And make such answer as her servant

Queen. Forbear him, Arthur: nay, and me: 'tis I

On whom all strokes first fall and sorest smite,

Who most of all am shieldless, without stay.

And look for no man's comfort. — Pray you, sir,

If it be in your will that I cast off

This heavy life to lighten your life's load

That now with mine is laden, let me die

More queenlike than this dog's death you denounce

Against the man that falls into your hate;

Though not for love, yet shame, because I was

A queen that loved you: else you should not seem

So royal in her sight whose eyes you serve,

Nor she when I am dead with such high heart

Behold you, nor with such glad lips commend

As conqueror of me slain for her love's sake

And servant of her living in your love. Let me die therefore queenlike, and your sword

Strike where your tongue hath struck; though not so deep,

It shall suffice to cleave my heart and end.

Bothwell. Hear you, my queen: if we twain be one flesh,

I will not have this daintier part of it Turn any timeless hand against itself To hurt me, nor this fire which is your tongue

Shoot any flame on me: no fuel am I
To burn and feed you; not a spark you
shed

Shall kindle me to ruin, but with my foot

Rather will I tread out the light that was

A firebrand for the death of many a

To light the pile whereon they burnt alive.

What! have I taken it in my hand to scorch

And not to light me? or hath it set

To so few lives already, that who bears Needs not to watch it warily and wake When the night falls about him? Nay, the man

Were twice the fool that these your dead men were,

Who seeing as I have seen and in his hand

Holding the fire I carry through the

To be the beacon of my travelling days, And shine upon them ended, should not walk

With feet and eyes both heedful at what hour,

By what light's leading, on what ground he goes, And toward what end. Be therefore

you content To keep your flame's heat for your ene-

mies' bale, And for your friend that large and lib-

eral light
That gave itself too freely, shot too

Till it was closed as in a lantern up

To make my path plain to me; which once lost,

The light goes out forever. *Queen.* Yea, I know;

My life can be but light now to your life,

And of no service else; or, if none there,

Even as you say, must needs be quenched; and would

The wind that now beats on it and the

Had quenched it ere your breath, and
I gone out

With no man's blood behind me!

Bothwell. Come, be wise:

Our sun is not yet sunken.

Queen. No, not yet:

The sky must even wax redder than it is

When that shall sink; darkness and smoke of hell.

Clouds that rain blood, and blast of winds that wreck,

Shall be about it setting.

Bothwell. What! your heart

Fails you now first that shrank not when a man's

Might well at need have failed him?

Queen. Ay, and no;

It is the heart that fired me, fails my heart;

And as that bows beneath it, so doth mine

Bend, and will break so surely.

Bothwell. Nay, not mine:
There is not weight yet on our adverse part,

Fear not, to bend it.

Queen. Yet it fails me now.

I have leant too much my whole life's weight on it

With all my soul's strength, and beneath the fraught I hear it split and sunder. Let me

rest:

I would fain sleep a space now. Who goes there?

Mary Beaton. A suitor to behold

your majesty.

Queen. I will not see him. Who should make suit to me?

Who moves yet in this world so miserable

That I can comfort? or what hand so weak

It should be now my suppliant, or uplift

In prayer for help's sake to lay hold on mine?

What am I to give aid or alms, who have

Nor alms nor aid at hand of them to

I gave not some but all part of myself?
I will not see him.

Mary Beaton. It is a woman.

Queen. Ay?

But yet I think no queen; and cannot be

But therefore happier and more strong than I.

Yet I will see what woman's face for grief

Comes to seek help at mine; if she be mad,

Me may she teach to lose my wits and woes,

And live more enviable than ye that yet Have wit to know me wretched.

Enter JANE GORDON.
Who is this?

Are you my suitor?

Jane Gordon. I am she that was Countess of Bothwell: now my name again

Is that my father gave me. Queen. Ay, no more;

You are daughter yet and sister to great earls,

And bear that honor blameless; be it enough;

And tell me wherefore by that name you come,

And with what suit, before me. Jane Gordon. Even but this:

To look once on you, and to bid farewell,

Ere I fare forth from sight. Queen. Farewell; and yet

I know not who should in this world fare well.

Is the word said?

Jane Gordon. A little leave at last I pray you give me: that I seek it not

For love or envy toward my sometime lord.

Or heart toward you disloyal now my queen,

Let me not plead uncredited. I came Surely with no good hope to no glad end,

But with no thought so vile of will as

To thrust between your hearts the care of me,

Claim right or challenge pity, melt or fret

Your eyes with forced compassion: I did think

To have kissed your hand, and some thing said for sign I had come not of weak heart or evil

But in good faith, to see how strong in love

They stand whose joy makes joyless all my life,

Whose loving leaves it loveless, and their wealth

Feeds full upon my famine. Be not wroth:

I speak not to rebuke you of my want, Or of my loss reprove you, that you

My crown of love to gild your crown of gold;

I know what right you have, and take no shame

To sit for your sake humbled, who being born

A poor mean woman would not less have been

By God's grace royal, and by visible

A natural queen of women; but being crowned

You make the throne imperial, and your hand

Puts power into the sceptre; yea, this head

Of its gold circlet takes not majesty, But gives it of its own; this may men

And I deny not; nor is this but just, That I, who have no such honor born or given,

Should have not either, if it please you

That which I thought I had; the name

I wore. The hand scarce yet a year since laid in mine.

The eye that burned on mine as on a wife's,

The lip that swore me faith, the heart that held

No thought or throb wherein I had no part,

Or heaved but with a traitor's breath, and beat

With pulse but of a liar. Bothwell. Ay, swore I so? Why, this was truth last year then.

Oueen. Truth, my lord?

What does the fire of such a word as this

Between such lips but burn them, as mine ears Burn that must hear by your device and

With what strange flatteries on her prompted lips This dame unwedded lifts her hand

unringed To abash me with its show of faith,

and make

Your wife ashamed at sight of such a

As yet she bears you that is not your wife? Bothwell. What devil should prick

me to such empty proof And pride unprofitable? I pray you

think

I am no such boy to boast of such a spoil

As chamberers make their brag of. Let her speak,

And part not as unfriends. Oueen. Madam, and you

That thus renumber and resound his

To what good end I know not, in our ear, -

What would you have of him whom your own will

Rose up to plead against as false, to break

His bonds that irked you, and unspeak the word

That held you hand in hand? Did you not pray

To be set free from bondage, and now

To question with the hand that you put off

If it did well to loose you?

Jane Gordon. Truly, no; Nor will I question with your grace in

Whether by mine own will and uncompelled

I only would have put that hand away That I will say would yet have held mine fast

But for my frowardness and rancorous mind;

Let all 'his even be so; as he shall

Who will say naught but with your queenly will,

Why, so will I. Yet ere I am gone, my lord, -

Oh, not my lord, but hers whose thrall am I, -

My sometime friend and yet not enemy, If this thing not offend you, that I crave

So much breath of you as may do me right,

I pray you witness for me how far forth And for what love's sake I took part with you,

Or gave consent to our devised divorce, And if this were for hate; for you should know

How much of old time I have hated

How bitter made my heart, what jealous edge

Set on mine envy toward you: spare not then

To say if out of cold or cankered heart I sought, or yielded shamefully for spite,

To be divided from you. Nay, forbear; Speak not, nor frown on me; you cannot say

I was your loveless or disloyal wife, Or in my void bed on disconsolate

Sought comfort but of tears: nor that Mine honor hurt of that which bruised

my heart, And grudged to help you to mine own

most wrong, And lend you mine own hand to smite

myself. And make you by mine own mouth

quit of me. This that I did, and wherefore I did this,

And if for love's or hate's sake, verily You shall not say you know not, and the queen

Shall blame me not to put you yet in mind.

here

Of this that was between us: wherefore

I take no shame at this my leave-taking To part as one that has not erred herein,

To love too little; this shall not be said When one bethinks him such a woman

That with poor spirit or with contracted heart

I gave myself to love you, or was found Too mean of mind or sparing of my

To cast for love the crown of love

And when you bade refuse you for my lord.

Whom, had you bidden, with my whole heart's blood

I had thought not much to purchase for my love:

But seeing nor blood nor all my body's

Might buy you back to love me, I was

That you should take them and my very

To buy new love and life with. Sir, and now

Ere we twain part — Queen. What! are ye parted not?

Between his lover and my lord I stand, And see them weep and wrangle ere they part,

And hold my peace for pity! Jane Gordon. God shall judge

If with pure heart and patience, or with soul

That burns and pines, I would have said farewell:

I crave but this much of your grace and God's, -

Make me at last not angry.

Queen. Have you held No counsel or communion with my lord

Since - I am shamed that take upon my lips

Such inquisition. If you have aught yet, speak;

I bid not nor forbid you.

Jane Gordon. Naught but this, -Nor think it much that I make record | To unpledge my faith, unplight my love, and so

Set on his hand the seal by touch of mine

That sunders us.

Oueen. You shall not take his hand. Fane Gordon. I think not ever then to touch it more,

Nor now desire, who have seen with

eyes more sad More than I thought with sorrowing eves to see

When I came hither: so this long last

Farewell, my lord; and you, his queen, farewell. Exit.

Queen. Hath she made end? While I have part in you,

None shall have part with me; was this my lord,

Was this not you that said so? Bothwell. Come, enough:

I am bound not to be baited of your tongues.

Queen. Bid her come back.

Bothwell. What! are you foolish?

You twain shall look in either's eyes no more.

Queen. Why should I look in yours to find her there?

For there she sits as in a mirror shown By the love's light enkindled from your heart.

That flashed but on me like a fen-fire lit To lure me to my grave's edge, whence I fall

Deep as the pit of hell; but yet for shame

Deny not her to me as me to her,

Me that have known this ever, but lacked heart

To put the thing to use I knew; and For both our sakes who have loved

you, play not false But with one love at once; take up

your love And wear it as a garland in men's

sight. For it becomes you: if you love me

You have lied by this enough; speak truth, shake hands,

Loose hearts, and leave me.

Bothwell. Vex not me too long, Vexing your own heart thus with vanity;

Take up your wisdom that you have at will,

And wear it as a sword in danger's sight

That now looks hard upon us. Mine you are,

Love me or love not, trust me not or trust,

As yours am I; and even as I in you, Have faith in me, no less nor further:

We shall have trust enough on either

To build a wall about us at whose

That sea of iron swayed by winds of

Shall break in foam like blood; and hurled once back,

The hearts and swords of all our enemies fallen

Lie where they fell forever. Know but this.

And care not what is unknown else: we twain

Have wrought not out this fortune that we have.

Nor made us way to such an hour and

To let men take and break it, while as fools We kiss and brawl and cry and kiss

again. And wot not when they smite. For

these next days, We will behold the triumph held at

Leith And pageant of a sea-fight as set forth

With open face and spirit of joyous-

To fix this faith in all men's eyes and minds,

That while life lives we stand indissoluble:

Then shall you send out for your child again

Forth of Lord Mar's good keeping, that your heart

May here have comfort in his present sight;

So shall all these who make his name their sword

Lie weaponless within our hand and hold,

Who are drawn in one against us, or prepare,

While we delay, for Stirling; where by this,

I am certified on faith of trusty men, Argyle is met with Morton, our good friends

That served us for their turn, with some that helped

To make our match and some that would have marred.

Once several-souled, now in their envies

As Lindsay, Athol, Herries; and to these

Maitland is fled, your friend that must not bleed,

Your counsellor is stolen away and lives

To whet his wit against you; but myself.

When we have shown us to the people, and seen

What eye they turn upon our marriage feast,

Will ride to Melrose, and raise up from sleep

Their hardy hearts whom now mine unfriends there Hold in subjection; Herries nor Lord

Hume
Nor Maxwell shall have power to tie

them up When I shall bid them forth, and all

the march
Shall rise beneath us as with swell

o' the sea
And wash of thickening waters when
the wind

Makes the sea's heart leap with such might of joy

As hurls its waves together; there shall we

Ride on their backs as warriors, and our ship

Dance high toward harbor. Put but on the spirit

You had in all times that beset your peace,

Since you came home, with danger; in those wars

That made the first years clamorous of

your reign,

And in this past and perilous year of

And in this past and perilous year of ours

Where you lacked never heart. Be seen again

The royal thing men saw you; these your friends

Shall look more friendly on our wedded faith

Seeing no more discord of our days to be,

And our bold borderers with one heart on fire

Burn in your warlike safeguard, once to strike And end all enemies' quarrel. When

we part,

At Borthwick Castle shall you look for me,

Where I will gather friends more fain of fight

Than all our foes may muster.

Queen. Sir, so be it;

But now my heart is lower than once it was,

And will not sit, I think, again so high, Though my days turn more prosperous than I deem.

But let that be. — Come, friends, and look not sad

Though I look sadder; make what cheer we may,

For festival or fight, or shine or shower, I will not fail you yet. God give me heart,

That never so much lacked it! yea, he shall,

Or I will make it out of mine own fears.

And with my feebleness increase my force,

And build my hope the higher that joy

Till all be lost and won. — Lead you, my lord,

And fear not but I follow: I have wept When I should laugh, and laughed when I should weep.

And now live humbler than I thought to be:

I ask not of your love, but of mine own I have yet left to give. Come, we will see

These pageants or these enemies; my

Shall look alike on either. Be not wroth:

I will be merry while I live, and die When I have leave. My spirit is sick: would God

We were now met at Borthwick, with men's spears

And noise of friends about us; friend or foe.

I care not whether; here I am sore at

As one that cannot wholly wake nor sleep

Till death receive or life reprieve me.

We should be glad now: let the world take note

We are glad in spite and sight of enmities

That are but worth the hour they take to quell.

## Scene XII. — Stirling Castle.

MAITLAND and LINDSAY.

Lindsay. Is there such breach between them? why, men said, When they would ride through Edin-

burgh, and he Bareheaded at her bridle, she would

By force and thrust his cap upon his With loving might and laughing; and

at Leith They saw the false fight on the waters

And mid-May pageants that shone down

the sun, As with glad eyes of lovers newly wed

Whose hearts were of the revel; and so soon

Are hearts and eyes divided? Maitland. Not an hour

May she draw breath but in his eye,

But whom he shall give entrance; in How shall he not have laid unhappy her sight

He thought to have slain me, but she came between,

And set for shield her bosom to his sword

In her own chamber: so each day and night

By violent act or viler word than deed He turns her eyes to water-springs of tears.

Who leaves not yet to love him; such

strong hold

By flesh or spirit or either made one fire Hath such men's love on women made as she.

For no foul speech, I think, nor strokes nor shame

Would she go from him, but to keep him fast

Would burn the world with fire; and no force less

Shall burn their bonds in sunder.

Lindsay. We will bring

And kindle it in their sight. They are southward fled

To meet at Borthwick: thither we de-

To raise the Merse with Hume, and with Lord Mar And with the Douglas' following bind

them round, And take them in one snare, whence

one of these Shall creep not forth with life or limb

that feels No hound's fang fasten on it; and his

Shall see their feet smoke with his

slaughtered blood.

Scene XIII. - Borthwick Castle.

The OUEEN and BOTHWELL: MARY BEATON in attendance.

Queen. You should be hence again: since you came in

From Melrose with no levies at your back.

We have heard no news of friends, and hear but now

That we are ringed with Morton's foll about;

hand

Upon your messenger that bare our word

Of summons to the archbishop and

your friend

Balfour to be with Huntley at our side?

Bothwell. Ay, he is trapped that bore my letters hence,

I doubt not; none have feet to run

aright,

Eyes to see true, hands to bring help, but they

That move them to our ruin. This

That move them to our ruin. This Balfour,

Whom I laid trust on since our fiery

night

As on a true man bound of force to me, Has fallen in conference and device of plots,

I hear, with that lean limb of policy

That loves me not, James Melville, by whose mouth

Being warned I meant to take out of

The castle-keys of Edinburgh, and give To one my closer kinsman for more trust.

He has made him friends of ancient foes, and seeks,

By no less service than pursuit of them Who slew the king your husband, to deserve

Their favor who are risen of honest

But to chastise these slayers, of whom God wot

Themselves were none, nor he that hunts with them

Upon the trail of treason. Oh, your lords

Are worthy friends and enemies, and their tongues

As trusty as their hands are innocent,

When they see time to turn.

Oucen. I would their lives

Lay all between my lips, and with one breath

I might cut all theirs off! nor tongue nor hand

Should rise of them against us, to deny Their work disclaimed when done. What slaves are these

That make their hands red with men's secret blood,

And with their tongues would lick them white, and wash

The sanguine grain out with false froth of words

From lying lips that kissed the dead to death,

And now cry vengeance for him? But, my lord,

Make you haste hence to-night ere they be here

That if we tarry will beset us; I

Should hang but as a fetter on your foot,

Which should pass free forth to Dunbar, and raise

With sound even of its tread and forward speed

The force of all the border.

Bothwell. Where I go,

There shall you not be far to find: tonight

I will sleep here.

Queen. God give you rest and strength,

To make that heart which is the lord of mine

Fresh as the spirit of sunrise! for last night

You slept not well.

Bothwell. No; I had dreams, that

No natural dreamer; I will sleep apart, With Cranston's son to lie at hand, or wait

If I lack service.

Queen. Nay, let me be there:

I will not weary you with speech, nor break

Your sleep with servile and officious watch,

But sit and keep it as a jewel is kept That is more dear than eyesight to its

Or as mine eyes can keep not now their

Now slumber sits far from them. Let me wake.

Botnwell. No, not with me.

Queen. What, lest I trouble you? Should my being there put dreams in you again,

To cross your sleep with me? Bothwell. Belike it might.

Queen. Nay, I was no part of your dreams, I think;

You dream not on me waking nor asleep,

But if you dream on no face else nor mine,

I will be yet content.

Bothwell. Well, so it was,

I dreamt at once of either; yet I know

Why I should tell my dream. Your lord that was,

They say, would prattle of his fears by night

And faces of false peril: I was never
So loath by day to face what fear I
might

As to be sick in darkness; but this

dream

I would not see again. Yet was it naught;

I seemed to stand between two gulfs of sea

On a dark strait of rock, and at my foot The ship that bore me broken; and there came

Out of the waves' breach crying of broken men

And sound of splintering planks, and all the hull

Shattered and strewn in pieces; and my head

Was as my feet and hands, bare, and the storm

Blew hard with all its heart upon me; then

Came you, a face with weeping eyes, and hair Half glimmering with a broken crown

that shone

Red as of molten iron; but your limbs Were swathed about and shrouded out of sight,

Or shown but as things shapeless that the bier

Shows ready for the grave; only the head
Floated, with eyes fast on me, and be-

neath
A bloodlike thread dividing the bare

A bloodlike thread dividing the bare throat

As with a needle's breadth, but all below

Was muffled as with cerecloths; and the eyes Wept; then came one we wot of, clad

in black,
And smiling, and laid hands on me

more cold
Than is a snake's kiss or the grave's.

and thrust
Between that severed head, weeping

and crowned,
That mourned upon me, and mine eyes

that watched,
Her own strange head wrapped widowlike and wan

In habit of one sorrowing, but with lips
That laughed to kiss me; and therewith at once

Your face as water flowed out of my sight.

And on mine own I felt as drops of blood

Falling, but if your tears they were, or hers,

Or either's blood, I knew not; on mine eyes

The great dead night shut doorwise like a wall,

And in mine ears there sprang a noise of chains, And teeth ground hard of prison-grates

that jarred
And split as 'twere with sound my
heart, which was

As ice that cleaves in sunder: for there came

Through that black breathless air an iron note

Of locks that shut and sounded, and being dumb

There left me quick entombed in stone, and hid

Too deep for the day's eyeshot; then I woke

With the sea's roaring and the wind's by night

Fresh in my sense, and on my travailing heart

A weight of walls and floors and upper earth

That held me down below the breach o' the sea

Where its tide's wash kept witness overhead

How went the scornful days and nights above,

Where men forgot me, and the living sun

As a dead dog passed over.

Queen. What, alone? She went not with you living under-

ground
To sit in chains and hear the sea break?

She would not cast you off. This was

your love, — Your love of her and need of her sweet

sight, That brought her so upon your sleep,

and made
Your sense so fearful of all things but
this,

And all else heard and seen so terrible But her face only: she should comfort you,

Whom I should bring to wreck; why, so she said.

Saying how she had loved you whom I loved not; yea,

Her eyes were sad, she said, that saw forsooth

So little love between us: this sweet word.

This word of hers at parting, this it

Of which your dream was fashioned, to give sign How firm she sits and fast yet in your

Where I was never.

Bothwell. Well, how be it soe'er, I would not dream again this dead

dream out

For less than kingly waking: so good
night,

For I will sleep alone.

Queen. No, with my heart,

That lies down with you though it sleeps not. Go,

And dream of no less loving prayer than mine

That calls on God for sleep to comfort you,

And keep your heart from sense of

aught more hard

Than her great love who made it.

[Exit BOTHWELL.

'Tis a night
That puts our France into my mind:
even here

By those warm stars a man might call it June,

Were such nights many; their same flower-bright eyes

Look not more fair on Paris, that mine

Again shall hardly look on. Is it not strange
That in this gray land and these griev-

That in this gray land and these grievous hours

I should so find my spirit and soul transformed

And fallen in love with pain, my heart that was

Changed and made humble to his loveless words

And force as of a master? By my faith,

That was till now fixed never, and made as fire To stand a sunlike star in love's live

heaven, —

A heaven found one in hue and heat

A heaven found one in hue and heat with hell,— I had rather be mis-handled as I am

Of this first man that ever bound me fast,

Than worshipped through the world

with breaking hearts
That gave their blood for worship. I

am glad He sometime should misuse me; else I

think
I had not known if I could love or

no.

If you could love man with my heart

as now,
You would not mock nor marvel.

Mary Beaton. No, not then.

Queen. It is not in your heart: there lies not power

In you to be for evil end or good. The strange thing that is I.

Mary Beaton. There does not, no, Nor can lie ever: could I love at all,

It were but as mean women, meanly

I do the best to love not.

Queen. Hark! what noise?

Look forth and see.

Mary Beaton. A sound of men and steeds;

The ring is round us; hark, the cry of Hume.

There Lindsay, and there Mar! Queen. Call up my lord:

I will not go to vex him; but do you

Haste and awake them.

[Exit MARY BEATON. Be it not in mine eyes

That he first sees death risen upon his sleep,

If we must die; being started out of rest,

If he should curse me, were my heart not slain

With the opening of his eyes in wrath on mine?

Re-enter MARY BEATON.

Mary Beaton. My lord is raised and

fled; but in the press
The lord of Cranston's son that slept

with him

Is fallen by flight into the enemy's hands.

Who cry out for him yet as hounds that quest,

And roar as on their quarry. Queen. Fled, and safe?

Mary Beaton. Ay, past their hands' reach that had rent him else;

Be sure he is forth, and free, or you should hear

More triumph in these cries. Queen. God, thou art good!

Fling wide the window: I will know of them

If they be come to slay me. — What, my lords!

Are all these men of mine that throng by night

To make such show of service, and present

Strange offices of duty? Where are ye That are chief ushers to their turbulent love

Who come thus riotously to proffer it?
Which is first here? a bold man should
he be

That takes unbidden on him such desert —

Let me not say, a traitor.

Lindsay (without). Where is he,

The traitor that we seek? for here is none

But in your bosom.

Queen. Here then ends your search, For here am I; and traitors near enough

I see to pierce the bosom that they seek,

Where never shall be treason till its blood

Be spilt by hands of traitors that till

Be spilt by hands of traitors that till now

Durst never rise so near it. Lindsay. Give him forth,

Or we will have these walls down. Queen. What, with words?

Is there such blast of trumpets in your breath

As shook the towers down of the foes of God

At the seventh sounding? yet we stand and laugh

That hear such brave breath blown and stormlike speech

Fly round our ears: is it because your war,

My lords is waged with women that

My lords, is waged with women, that ye make
Such woman's war on us?

Mar (without). Madam, we come

To take you from his hand that is your shame,

And on his shameful head revenge that blood
Which was shed guiltless; hither was

he fled,
We know, into your shelter: yield him

up, Ere yet worse come than what hath

worst come yet

Queen. There is none here to die by

you but I, And none to mock you dying. Take

all your swords;
It is a woman that they came to slay,

And that contemns them: go not back for fear:

Pluck up your hearts; one valiant stroke or twain,

And ye are perfect of your work, and I Forever quit of treason; and I swear, By God's and by his mother's name and mine.

Except ye slay me presently, to have Such vengeance of you and my traitors

As the loud world shall ring with; so to-night

Be counselled, and prevent me, that am

Yet in your hands; if ye dare slay me not,

Ye are dead now here already in my

Take heart, and live to mock it.

Mar. He is fled.

Here boots us not to tarry, nor change words

With her that hath such vantage as to

We have missed our prize and purpose here, which was

To take the traitor that is fled, and bring

Whither we now ride foiled, to Edinburgh,

Thence to return upon them.

Lindsay. Hear yet once:

You, madam, till our day be set of doom, Look to the adulterer's head that hence is flown,

Whose shame should now stand redder in your face

Than blushes on his hand your husband's blood,

And cleave more fast; for that dead lord's revenge

Will we make proclamation, and raise

The streets and stones for vengeance of your town

That sits yet sullied with bloodguiltiness

Till judgment make it clean; whose walls to-night

Myself, for fault of better, ere I sleep Will scale though gates be fastened, and therein

Bring back and stablish justice that shall be

A memory to the world and unborn

Of murder and adultery. Queen. Good my lord,

We thank you for the care you have and pains

To speak before you smite; and that so long

The deed can follow not on the swift word

For lack of spirit and breath to mate with it;

So that they know who hear your threat betimes

What fear it bears and danger, and for fear

Take counsel to forestall it. Make good speed;

For if your steed be shod but with fleet speech,

Ere you shall stride the wall of our good town

Its foot may trip upon a traitor's grave.

Mary Beaton. They ride fast yet:
hear you their starting cry?

Queen. For each vile word and venomous breath of theirs,

I will desire at my lord's hand a head When he shall bring them bound before my foot.

If thou hast counsel in thee, serve me now:

I must be forth, and masked in such close wise

As may convey me secret to his side Whence till our wars be done I will not part

Nor then in peace forever: in this shape

I should ride liable to all eyes and hands

That might waylay me flying; but I will play

As in a masque for pastime, and put on

A horseboy's habit, or some meaner man's

That wears but servant's steel upon his thigh

And on his sleeve the badge but of a groom,

And so pass noteless through toward Haddington,

Whither my lord had mind to flee at need.

And there expect me. Come: the night wears out;

The shifting wind is sharper than it was,

And the stars falter. Help me to put off This outward coil of woman; my heart beats

Fast as for fear a coward's might beat, for joy

That spurs it forth by night on warriors' ways,

And stings it with sharp hope to find

And stings it with sharp hope to find his face

That shall look loving on me, and with smiles

Mock the false form and cheer the constant heart

That for his love's sake would be man's indeed.

## ACT IV .- JOHN KNOX.

Time: June 15 and 16, 1567.

Scene I. - Carberry Hill.

The QUEEN, BOTHWELL, and SOLDIERS.
Queen. I would this field where fate
and we must cross

Were other than it is; but for this thought,

On what ill night some score of years

ago Here lay our enemy's force before that

Which made next day the face of Scot-

land red, And trod her strength down under

English feet,

I would not shrink in this wide eye of dawn,

In the fair front of such a summer's day,

To meet the mailed face of my traitors' host

And with bared brows outbrave it.

Bothwell. Keep that heart,

For fear we need it. Look beyond the bridge

There at this hill's foot on the western bank.

How strong they stand under the gathering light:

I have not seen a battle fairer set Or in French fields, or these our thirstier lands

That feed unslaked on blood.

Queen. They grow now green, — These hills and meadows that with

slain men's lives

Have fed the flocks of war; come ten years yet,

And, though this day should drench them with more death

Than that day's battle, not a stain shail stand
On their fresh face for witness. Had

God pleased
To set a strong man armed with hands

To set a strong man armed with hands to fight,

And on his head his heritage to keep, Sworded and crowned a king, in my sad stead,

To fill the place I had not might to hold;

And for the child then bitterly brought forth,

Unseasonable, that being but woman born
Broke with the news her father's heart,

who died Desperate in her of comfort, had he

The warrior that I would be, and in time

To look with aweless eye on that day's fight
That reddened with the ruin of our

hopes
The hour that rocked my cradle, — who

shall say
The scathe of Pinkie Cleugh and all
that blood

Had made the memory so unfortunate Of that which was my birth-time? Being a man,

And timelier born to better hap than mine,

I might have set upon that iron day Another mark than signs it in our sight Red with reproach forever.

Bothwell. Ay, my queen?

These four nights gone, you met me soldier-like

Escaped from Borthwick, whence I brought you in,

Three darkling hours past midnight, to Dunbar,

Where you put off that sheath of fighting man

For this poor woman's likeness yet you wear,

Wherein you rode with your six hundred men

To meet at Haddington but two days

These sixteen hundred border folk I led.

And pass with me to Seyton: did you find

Your life more light in you, or higher your heart,

Inside that habit than this woman's coat

That sits so short upon you?

Queen. By my life,

I had forgot by this to be ashamed Of the strange shape I ride in, but

your tongue Smites my cheek red as is this scanted

weed Wherein I mask my queenship; yet

God knows
I had liefer ride thus forth toward such

a day Than hide my sick heart and its fears

at home
In kinglier garments than this mask of
mine.

Thus with my kirtle kilted to the knee Like girls that ride in poor folks' ballads forth

For love's sake and for danger's less than mine.

Yet had I rather as your henchman ride At your right hand, and hear your bridle ring,

Than sit thus womanly to watch men strike.

Bothwell. There will be parleying first: I have word of this,

That they set forth at heaviest of the night

From Edinburgh to cross our march betimes,

And by the French ambassador your friend

At Musselburgh were overtaken, whence

We look for news by him what hearts they bear,

What power, and what intent; he hath ta'en on him

To stand between our parts as mediator And bear the burden of our doubtful peace;

We must fight mouth to mouth ere hand to hand,

But the clean steel must end it.

Queen. Now would God

I had but one day's manhood, and might stand

As king in arms against this battle's breach

A twelve-hours' soldier and my life to

A twelve-hours' soldier, and my life to

Be bounded as a woman's! all those days

That must die darkling should not yet put out

The fiery memory and the light of joy That out of this had lightened, and its heat

Should burn in them for witness left behind

On those piled ashes of my latter life.
O God, for one good hour of man, and
then

Sleep or a crown forever!

Bothwell. By God's light,

The man that had no joy to strike for you

Were such a worm as God yet never made

For men to tread on. Kiss me: by your eyes

And fiery lips that make my heart's blood hot,

I swear to take this signet of your kiss As far into the fight as man may bear, And strike as two men in mine arm and stroke

Struck with one sense and spirit.

Queen. If I might change

But this day with you in your stead to strike,

And you look on me fighting, as for me

You have fought ere this last heat so many a prize,

Or for your own hand ere your own was mine,

I would pray God for naught again alive.

But since my heart can strike not in my hand,

Fight you for me; put on my heart to yours,

And let the might of both enforce your arm

With more than its own manhood and that strength

Which is your natural glory. Bothwell. Sweet, I think,

When we have rid through this day's wrath, if God

Shall give us peace and kingdom and long life,

And make them fruitful to us, we shall bring forth

A brood of kings as lions. Now in brief

If this shall be, or shall not, may we know;

For look where yonder, facing to the

Comes up to us-ward from the under field

One with a flag of message; in mine

It is the Frenchman.

Queen. I will meet him here;

Here will I sit upon this rock for throne,

And give such audience as my fortune

may, — Either the last that shall salute me

queen, Or first of my new reign, that from this

day
Shall fearfully begin for them whose

fear
Till now has held me shackled, and my
will

Confined of theirs unqueenly.

Bothwell. I meantime

Will see our line in order; for this truce

Must hold not long; I would our hosts should meet Before the heat strikes of the middle

day,
And this June sun drop on our soldiers'
heads

Or shoot their eyes out.

Queen. If God give us peace!

Yet, though he give and we twain see good days,

I would not lose for many fortunate years, And empire ringed with smooth secu-

rity, The sharp and dangerous draught of

this delight
That out of chance and peril and keen

fear
Springs as the wine out of the trampled

Springs as the wine out of the trampled grape

To make this hour sweet to my lips,

and bid
My dancing heart be like a wave in the

When the sea sways between the sun and wind

As my sense now between the fears and hopes

That die to-day forever. Oh! this doubt That is not helpless, but has armor on And hands to fight with, has more joy

withal,
And puts more spirit into the flesh of

life,

More heart into the blood and light in

More heart into the blood, and light in the eyes, Than the utter hour of triumph, and

the fight

More than the prize is worth man's

prizing; yea,
For when all's won, all's done, and
naught to do

Is as a chain on him that with void hands

Sits pleasureless and painless. I had rather Have looked on Actium with Mark

Antony
Than bound him fast on Cydnus. O
my hour!

Be good to me, as even for the doubt's sake

More than safe life I love thee; yet would choose

Not now to know, though I might see the end,

If thou wilt be good to me; do thy work,

Have thine own end; and, be thou bad or good,

Thou shalt nor smite nor crown a queen in heart

Found lesser than her fortune.

Enter Du CROC.

Now, my lord,

What is their will who by such sovereign show

Should be my lords indeed? if you that came

'Twixt crown and crown ambassador pass now

Between our camps on message: but this day Shall leave in Scotland but one sovereignty

To see that sun sink.

Du Croc. Madam, from the lords I come on errand but for love and fear That move me toward your highness; on whose part

I reasoning with them of their faith to

you,

And bond wherein their loyalties should live,

By counsel of the Laird of Lethington, Was charged to bear you from them present word

For what they stand against your sight in arms,

And will not but by force of yours dissolve

Till it be granted.

Queen. Speak, my lord: I know Your heart is whole and noble as their faith

Is flawed and rotten; no disloyal word Shall make your tongue disloyal in mine ear,

Speaking for them.

Du Croc. This is their whole demand:

That from the bloody hand which holds your own

You pluck it forth, and cast him from your sight

To judgment, who now stands through you secure,

And makes his weapon of your wounded name,

And of your shame his armor; and to

They offer fight with equal hand to hand,

Of noble seconds in what sum he will To match in blood and number with his own.

If so he list to meet their chosen of

In personal battle, backed with less or

Or singly sworded; but this much they swear, -

They had rather make their beds in the earth alive

Than yet sit still and let this evil be.

And on your own part I beseech your grace,

Set not your heart against the hearts of these,

Lest it be broken of them, but betimes Call yet to mind what grief and shame will be

Among your friends in France and all our part

To see you so with this man's hap inwound

That in his fall you cast yourself away, And hand in hand run on with him to

Queen. They are all forsworn that seek his death: all they

With these blown tongues now questing for his blood

By judgment set him free as inno-And now take back the doom they

gave, and turn On their own heads the lie: devise

such shame As lewd folk loathe, to gird themselves

withal. And wear it for a jewel; seek and set The name of liar upon them like a

And bind about them as a coat and cloak

Plain treason and ungilded infamy,

Bare as a beggar; let them sue for grace, Kneel here and ask me favor; save as

I treat not with them. Say how I sit

In this mean raiment, on this naked

Their queen to judge them, and with

heart to weigh

Their fault against my mercy; which yet once,

Though hardly their submission may deserve,

Say, haply they may find.

Re-enter BOTHWELL.

Bothwell. Good day, my lord.

You look far off upon me; by your brow

And strange-eyed salutation I may read The burden of your this day's embassy. Is it but I whom all these ranked in

Are come against to battle?

Du Croc. Ay, my lord:

No hand is raised there dangerous to the queen,

Nor thought of heart not loyal.

Bothwell. Why to me? What hurt have I done to them? none

of these

But would be gladly in my place, who had

The heart to seek it; 'tis the braver man

That ever fortune follows: what I hold I have won not basely, but from forth her hand

Have ta'en it manlike, and with spirit as good

Have girt me to maintain it. For my part,

I seek no bloodshed, but in single field Will meet with whom their lot shall fall upon

That shall be found fair champion on their part

To bear the general quarrel; and to

My state and present name shall be no

But the queen's consort as her man

shall fight
In any good cause simply with God's

With any sword that shames not mine to meet.

Queen. It is my cause: me must they strike, or none;

Myself am all the quarrel; let them yield,

Or give me battle.

Bothwell. Then, no need of words:

Let but your excellency stand here
by,

And see the show as once that envoy bound

'Twixt Hannibal and Scipio; by God's grace
This too shall be worth sight and good

This too shall be worth sight and good report

If he not fail us.

Du Croc. Madam, with rent heart Must I take leave, then, of you.

Queen. Sir, farewell.

I pray you, say not that you saw me weep:

These tears are not to turn the sword's edge soft,

Nor made of fear nor pity; but my heart

Holds no more rule on my rebellious eyes

Than truth on those my traitors; yet I trust

Again to bring both under.

[Exit Du Croc.

Bothwell. We must fight; Yet had I rather take it on mine hand

Than dare the general field.

Queen. No, for God's love.

Bothwell. God hath not so much love of us to serve;

Nor would I wager on his head today

That he shall fight upon our side Look there!

They are at point to cross; even now you see

The first glint on them stirring of the sun

As they set forth to make by the eastern bank

Along the meadows edgeways toward Dalkeith

Before they turn in wheel, and take the

I see their bent of battle; yet we keep The slopes and crest here with ou covering lines

If they stand fast.

Queen. What, have you fear of that Bothwell. I cannot tell. The day grows fiery hot:

I would we might close in at once, and strike

Before the noon burn; all the pause we make,

Who stand here idle watchers till they join.

Takes off some heart from us for weari-

And gives us doubt; I would the field were set.

Queen. Why should not we that wait for them and chafe

Break rather on them coming, and brush off

Their gathering muster from the hillskirts there

With one sheer stroke of battle as from heaven.

Right on them hurling down with all our host

Out of these heights ere they made

head below? Bothwell. No, my sweet captain: we

must hold this fast, This height of vantage, and keep close our ranks

As I have ranged in order: see again,

How they sweep round, and settle fast in file

There on the ridge of Cowsland, with their backs

Turned on the sun that climbs toward noon too fast,

And in their front that hollow gap of hill

Three crossbow-shots across; so far apart

look upon each other for a breath.

And hold our hands from battle; but you see

How soon both sides must lash together: yea,

I would we might not hold off yet an hour.

But close at once, and end. Queen. That burgh below,

Is it not Preston Pans? These hills are set

As stages for the show of such high game

As is played out for God's content on earth

Between men's kings and kingdoms; yet I think

He that beholds hath no such joy o' the game

As he that plays, nor can the joy be known Save of man only, that man has to

play When the die's throw rings death for

him or life. How clear the wind strikes from the

mounting sun! I am glad at heart the day we have

of fight Should look thus lively on both sides

that meet Beneath so large an open eye of heaven.

The wind and sun are in my blood; I feel

Their fire and motion in me like a breath

That makes the heart leap. Dear, I too have read

The tale of Rome whence lightly you chose out A likeness for us; but the parts we

bear.

We are to play them with a difference,

A fairer end upon us though we fall Than they that in their hazard were most like

To this our imminent fortune: had I been

She for whose lips love let the round world fall,

And all man's empire founder, on that When earth's whole strengths met on

the warring sea, And side with side clashed of the king-

domed world, I had not given my galleys wings for

To bear me out of the eye of battle,

Put space of flight between me and my

love,

More than I think on this wave's edge that foams

To leave our chance unshipwrecked, or forsake

My more imperial Antony.

Bothwell. Would that now

We stood less near their hazard! on our part

I fear to see the lines already melt

If we hold longer off, and this firm front

Unfix itself and with no stroke dissolve As snows in summer: half my folk by

For thirst are fallen upon the wine-

casks there We brought from Seyton; and for those that stand,

We have not half their hearts upon our

Whose hands are armed to uphold it.

I must fight With whom they choose, and take upon my hand

The day with all its issue: if our cause Be set upon the general cast of fight,

It is but lost. Let messengers be sent To know of the enemy if his challenge

Which I stand armed to answer; but no Scot

Shall bear the message and betray our need:

Two Frenchmen of your guard shall cross, and bring

Their fighter's name back that my sword must know,

And we twain meet, and end it in fair

Between these ranks; and for my single part,

I am glad the chance should hang but on my hand,

And my sole stroke determine the dim

That flags yet in the dark and doubt of

Till mine arm fix it fast, and in God's sight Confirm and close the chapter of it.

Come, Choose you your envoys.

Queen. Nay, choose you the man That you will fight with; let him be not one

Who had no part with us in Darnley's blood.

So God shall strike not on his unjust side

Who fights against you. Bothwell. 'Faith, if God were judge, He should not do us right to approve their cause

Who helped us to that slaying, and in its name

Take on them now to accuse us, and appeal

As guiltless to him against their proper deed

And this right hand that wrought but with their will;

Wherefore, so far forth as it hangs on God. From such a champion I should bear

the bell. If he be righteous; which to assure you

That even for God's sake you may feel no fear.

Let Morton meet me.

Queen. Oh, that two-tongued knave! The worst of all my traitors, whom I

spared And should have slain when you had brought him home

To help despatch his friend that had been! Nay,

Him shall you meet not: he shall die no death

So brave as by your sword; the axe thinks long To clasp his cursed neck; your hand,

dear lord.

Shall not redeem it.

Bothwell. Come, content you, sweet; Him I must meet, or other; and my-

Care not if one that struck with us it be Or one that struck not; only for your ease,

To make you trustful for God's judgment's sake

And confident of justice, I thought well To choose a man of counsel with us then.

And on this challenge fight with him, that God

Might witness with us of his treacherous

If I should win the field; but, by this hand,

I put more trust in it and in my sword Than in God's hand or judgment. Have

no fear.

The just and unjust that he looks upon, With blameless hand dividing their just doom

To one and other. Yea, as thou art

With eye to read between our hearts, and hand

To part between us punishment and Hear, God, and judge; and as thy sen-

tence is.

So shall man's tongue speak ever of this day

And of his cause that conquers. Morton. Laird of Grange,

While these that twice brought message from the queen

Bear now this last news back of what they hear,

Lest, when the traitor knows whom he shall meet.

His foul heart fail him, and his false

foot flee By what way forth is left him toward

Dunbar, Take you two hundred horse, and with good speed

Cross to the right beyond this hollow ground,

And cut him off: so, though he fain would fly

And she stand fast or follow, yet we

As in one toil the lioness and the wolf That clomb by night into the lion's bed, Who stand now staked about with nets, and, ringed

With pikes and hounds of hunters, glare at bay

With eyes and teeth that shine against us yet; But the fierce feet are trammelled in

our toils. Nor shall the tongues lap life again of

Du Croc. Ay, lion-like, my lord, she bears herself,

As who should shake all spears or shafts away

Like leaves that fell upon her, and all

As grains of dust brushed off; but he too makes

Such gallant show at need of such good heart

As in this utter peril where he stands Might win, for one that had no unjust cause,

Pity and praise of enemies, and for him At least such mingled and discolored fame

As falls not on a coward; nor can men Report him in his end and sore extreme But as a soldier tried of hand and brain,

Skilful and swift, with heart to match his eve

And wit to serve them; could these yet

To ransom him by spirit of soldiership And craft with courage tempered as with fire

To wield with fiery cunning the wide

He should not fall but mightily, nor cease

But with a strife as earthquake.

Morton. Well, my lord,

With no such strife we think to win him. — Go.

And if they send again to treat with us, Speak you with her, and bring us once more word.

## Scene III. - THE QUEEN'S CAMP.

The OUEEN and BOTHWELL. Queen. Are we quite lost? Bothwell. Ay, if I fight not; but

I will not die and fight not. Queen. What, no help?

Is there not left a score of manlike men To stand and strike round us that in their ring

May fight enclosed, and fall where none shall fly?

Are all our strengths slid from us? not one troop

That has not piecemeal dropped with shame away?

Not some twelve friends to back us yet, and die

As never men died nobler?

Bothwell. No. not three:

My levies there of Lothian and the Merse

Are slipped away like water; of your

Not yet four hundred lie along the heights,

Nor half will stay of these a half-hour hence.

Look too where yonder rides about the hill

The Laird of Grange, between us and Dunbar,

As to make onset with two hundred

Thence where the way is smooth, while those in front

Charge up the hill right on our unfenced camp,

And their trap's teeth shut on us. This remains

Of all our chance, this one way to make end,

That, while they yet refuse me not a

To bear the day's weight on his sword and mine,

I go to meet whom they soever choose, With no more question made; and this I will,

If yet they grant me but their meanest man

For opposite as equal.

Queen. Have they hearts,

That have you for their fiery star of fight

To see and not to follow? That I could

But give mine own among all these

But give mine own among all these away,

And with the parcels of it portioned out

Divide myself into a hundred hearts Of manlier-spirited blood, to raise us up

For these a tribe of soldiers! Speak to them,

And they will hear, and hunger to go

Full of your words to death; yea, all as I

Will thirst to die around you. O my God!

What is their blood, that it can kindle not

To be so called of such a chief to die,

To hear his words, and leap not? Hast thou made

Such stuff of man's flesh as we take for man,

And mixed not soul enough to serve

And mixed not soul enough to serve the hound

Who gives for love his life up? These go back,

These that might die, they start aside from death,

They have no joy to close with it, but fear,—

These that I deemed, come what might worst on us,

Should fall with face and heart one fire of joy

To ride on death, and grapple him and die.

Have I not heard of men once in the world?

I see none only but mine only love,

Who finds not one to follow. You shall fight,
And, if we thrive not, shame them with

your end
As I with mine ensuing. That I might

stand
Your second, and my sword be page to

yours, As on your death my death should wait

at need,
And halt not after! No, you shall not

die.
O miserable white hanging hands, that

Baffled and bloodless! let your king-

dom go,
Let all things pass together: what of

price Should ye keep back that could not

fight for him
Who falls for lack of seconds? Nay

the fault Comes all of me that fail him, I it

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Bring down that high head to the earth

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That helmless head, for my sake; oh,

for love's,
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but strike;

For if I live I shall but deal more death,

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for love's,
Kiss me, and kill me! be not wroth,

but strike;
For if I live I shall but deal more

For if I live I shall but deal mor death,

And where I would not shall the more destroy,

Living and loving; yea, whom I would save,

Him shall I slay the surelier: save then me,

Lest I do this, and dying abhor myself, Save me and slay; let not my love again

Kill more than me, that would have shed my blood

To spare the blood I shed; make me now sure;

Let me cease here.

Bothwell. Peace, and give heed: you see

Whither the day has brought us, and what hope

Holds anywhere of rescue; this one lot
Lies in my hand by fortune to be

drawn, —
That yet by God's and by our enemies'

That yet by God's and by our enemies'

I may fight singly though my whole world fail,

And end no less than soldier. Now, my queen,
As you are highest of women's hearts

that live, And nobler than your station stands

your soul,—
As you had never fear, and in this

As ever you have loved me, — by such sign

And in such name I charge you, put

In this great need to shame: let me go forth

As should yourself being king, had you the cause

That our linked loves put on me. By that heart

That is so fain within you to be man's, Make me not meaner than the man I

Nor worthless of the name; think with what soul

Would you stand up to battle in my stead,

And wrong me not to pluck that prize away,

Which, were you I, you would not yield to me,

Nor I would ask of you; desire not this,

To have me for your sake so vile a thing,
When I should rise up worthiest, that

When I should rise up worthiest, that no man

Could bear such name, and live; bid me not be—

Because you love me that are first on earth

And crowned of queens most royal such a slave

As might not seek and be not spit upon

The foulest favor that is given for gold

From lips more vile than all things else but I

Who durst not fight for you: make me not this;

Let me die rather such a man as might, Having your love, had fortune loved him too,

Have lived beside you kinglike, and not left

Less memory than a king's.

Queen. Oh, you shall go!
Look how I hold you not: yes, you shall fight,

And I sit strengthless here. — You shall not yet:

If I did know that God were with my heart,

Then should you go indeed; could l sit sure

My prayer had power upon him, and my cause

Had made him mine to fight for me, and take

My charge and this field's issue in his hand,

I would not doubt to send you. Nay, myself

Will speak to those my soldiers; they will fight;

They shall not choose for shame who hear me speak,

But fear to fight not. Oh, for all this

If they were men about me, they would sweep

Those traitors from the hillside as a wind,

And make me way to live. What! if I speak,

If I kneel to them, each man by his name.

Bid him fight for me though I be not king,

His king to lead him, — as, had I been born

My father's son, they should have fought, and found

A king to fight for and a sword to lead Worth many a good sword's following, —nay, but these

That will not fight for you whose sword they see

Worth all their swords to follow, for no king's

Would they take heart to strike. Love, you shall go:

Send out a flag to bid one come and say

Who dares of all fight with you. Why, methought

This march-folk loved you and your sword's bright name

That burned along their borders: is there left

No such fierce love of theirs and faith at need

To do us soldier's service?

Bothwell. Look, and see:

Their ranks unknit themselves, and slide more fast

From the bare slopes away whereon they stand

Than the last leaves or the last snows that fade

From off the fields or branches: and this thaw

Speaks not our spring, but winter.

Let them pass;
If I may stand but in mine enemy's

face, One foot of ours shall slip not, and one

hand Be reddened on our side. I will go

send Word with your flag of truce by Ormis-

To bid their spokesman to us. [Exit. Queen. What am I worth,

That can nor fight nor pray? my heart is shut

As a sealed spring of fire, and in mine ears

This air that holds no thunder, but fair day,

Sounds louder than a stricken brazen bell

That rings in a great wind, or the blown sea

That roars by night for shipwreck.

Re-enter BOTHWELL with KIRKALDY.
Bothwell. Here is he

That brings our lords' will with him, and shall show

But in your private ear; I while you please

Will wait apart upon you. [Retires. Oneen. Is it you,

Is it my friend of France, my knight and friend,

Comes on such errand in mine extreme need

To me that honored him? Sir, time has been

That, had one asked me what man most on earth

I would for trust have sought the service of

In such sore straits as this, I had found no name But yours to leap the first upon my

lips,
On whom I have seen my father, the

French king,
Point with his hand, saying, Yonder
goes there one

Of the most valiant men in all our age,

And ever would he choose you on his side

In all his pastimes for your manhood's sake

And might in jousts of men and gallant games,

And when they shot for mastery at the butts

Would make you shoot two arrows still for one,

And took delight beyond all shots of theirs

To see how far forth would your great shaft fly, Sped for his pleasure; and my heart grew great

For my land's sake whereof your strength was made,

That bore such men for honor; and the

Who served my father Henry in his

Looked reverently upon you horsed at head

Of your brave hundred men that rode with you,

And never the great constable of France Would speak to you uncovered as to

one Less than his own place worthy; and

your hand Here on these marches hath not lost its praise

For many as fair a stroke as overthrew Between our ranks and the English in mid-field

Lord Rivers' brother, fighting for this

That with a tongue as true and serviceable

You strove in speech to save the freedom of,

That by no policy it should be subdued To a French province. So for faith and love,

For valor, wisdom, and tor gentleness, I wist no Scot had worthier name alive: Shall I say now I have no deadlier [KIRKALDY kneels.

I do not bid you kneel: speak, and stand up;

I have no help or comfort of men's knees,

Nor pleasure of false worship; well I know,

For all knees bowed, how hearts and hands are bent

Of mine own men against me. Speak, I pray:

I am as their servant bound who speak in you

And open-eared to hear them.

Kirkaldy. From the lords, Madam, no word I have to bring but

That from this field they will not part alive

Without the man in bonds they came to seek; Him will they take, or die: but on your

They have no thought that is not set to

serve And do you honor, would but you for-

The murderer of your husband, who to

you Can be no husband, being but lately

wed To the earl of Huntley's sister, and

your friend By your own mean and favor.

Queen (to Bothwell). Hold, my lord:

Let not your man give fire. — Sir, guard vourself:

See you not where one stands to shoot at you? -

You will not do me this dishonor, see-

I have given my faith he should come safely through,

And go back safe?

Bothwell. Why let him, then, and say That I will yet maintain my proffered

To fight with any that shall challenge

Of the king's murder.

Kirkaldy. Sir, the first was I

To let you wit myself would fight with

Upon that quarrel; and the first refused, As being nor earl nor lord nor mate of

yours, But a poor baron only; the like word

You sent to Tullibardine; in whose

Stands now my lord of Lindsay, if your

Yet fail you not to meet him, as it seems

Now to grow cold in shadow of his sword

That hangs against you in the air advanced,

Darkening your sight and spirit.

Bothwell (to the QUEEN). Shall this

be said,

This shame go forth forever through the world

Of one that held you by the wedded hand

And loosed it even for fear? Now let me go:

There is no way now but the best, and

You shall no more forbid me: one last

I do implore you, make not of your love

The branding-iron that should sign me

slave

In sight of all men always, and on you Stamp the vile name of wife to no true man,

But harlot of a coward: who shall spare

To throw that name and shame on such a love

As came to such an end as ours shall come

If here its sun set bloodless, but more

With shame than blood could brand it? Queen. I have thought,

And set my heart against all chance to come

Of blame or blood that ever shall mark me;

Alone I take it on mine only hand, And will not yield this one thing up to yours,

Who have yielded all things else, and this I would,

But that I may not with my soul alive.—

Sir, if my lords within whose hand I am

Shall stand content to let my husband go,

Into their ward will I give up myself
On what good terms shall please them
to call good,

So he may pass forth freely with such friends

Of these that have not hands enough to fight

As shall cleave to him; I pray you make good speed,

And let this day have end. Kirkaldy. Madam, I go.

Queen. Do not speak yet: a word should burst my heart;

It is a hollow crystal full of tears
That even a breath might break, and
they be spilt

And life run out with them; no dia-

mond now, But weaker than of wax. Life of that

heart, There is but one thing hath no rem-

edy, —
Death. All ills else have end or hope

of end, And time to work their worst before

time change:
This death hath none; there is all hope

shut fast, \*
All chance bound up forever: change

nor time
Can help nor comfort this. You shall
not die;

I can hold fast no sense of thought but this, —

You shall not.

Bothwell. Well, being sundered, we may live,

And living meet; and here to hold the field

Were but a deadly victory, and my hand The mockery of a conqueror's; we should pass

No less their prisoners from the field thus won

Than from these lists defeated. You do well;
They dare not urge or strain the power

they have
To bring me prisoner where my witness

borne borne

Might show them parcel of the deed and guilt

For which they rise up to lay hold on me

As upright men of doom, and with pure hands

To hale me to their judgment. I will

Till good time bring me back; and you that stay,

Keep faith with me.

[Exit.

Queen. Oh, how does one break faith? What are they that are faithless? by my love,

I cannot tell or think how I should lie, Should live and lie to you that are my faith,

My soul, my spirit, my very and only God,

My truth and trust that makes me true of heart,

My life that feeds and light that lightens me, My breath and blood of living. Doth

My breath and blood of living. Doth God think

How I shall be without you? what strange breath

Shall my days draw, what strange blood feed my life,

When this life that is love is gone from

them And this light lost? Where shall my

And by what far ways follow to find

Fly where love will? Where will you turn from me?

Bothwell. Hence will I to Dunbar, and thence again

There is no way but northward and to ship

From the north islands; thence betimes abroad

By land or sea to lurk, and find my life Till the wheel turn.

Queen. Ah God! that we were set

Far out at sea alone by storm and night

To drive together on one end, and know

If life or death would give us good or

And night or day receive, and heaven or earth

Forget us or remember! — He comes back:

Here is the end.

Bothwell. But till time change his tune:

No more nor further. We shall find our day.

Queen. Have we not found? I know not what we shall,

But what hath been and is, and whence they are,

God knows if now I know not. He is here.

Re-enter KIRKALDY.

Kirkaldy. Madam, the lords return by me this word:

With them must you go back to Edin burgh,

And there be well entreated as o friends;

And for the duke, they are with onmind content

He should part hence for safe and present flight;

But here may tarry not, or pass not free.

This is the last word from them by my mouth.

Queen. Ay is it, sir, — the last word I shall hear, —

Last in mine ear forever: no command

Nor threat of man shall I give ear to more,

That have heard this. — Will you not go, my lord?

Is it not I would hold you. Bothwell. Then, farewell,

And keep your word to me. What, no breath more?

Keep then this kiss too with the word you gave,

And with them both my heart and its good hope To find time yet for you and me. Fare-

well. [Exit. Queen. O God! God! God!

Cover my face for me:
I cannot heave my hand up to my

head; Mine arms are broken.

Is he got to horse?

I do not think one can die more than this.

I did not say farewell.

Kirkaldy. My lord is gone.

Queen. Whom spake I to? I have no woman here.

All these men's eyes have seen my naked face

naked face Wrung without tears for anguish, and

no hand Hide my blind eyes if haply they might weep

Great drops of blood and fiery. — Laird of Grange,

! yield myself upon such terms to you As in these lords' name you rehearsed to me:

Have here my hand for sign. Kirkaldy. Upon this hand

I lay the loyal witness of my lips

For duteous heart and service, and crave leave

That I may lead your highness through these ranks,

Where at the hill's foot we may find your friends

Who shall come forth to meet you as their queen

With all fair reverence.

Queen. Lead me to my lords:

For one so poor a servant as I am, Here are too many masters. I could

pray,

But that they lack my service and should chafe

If I dwelt long upon my prayer, and let My daty sleep or slacken toward them; else

I could pray God to shut up from these lands

His hand and eye of favor, that no dew Might breed herefrom and no bloom break again

Nor grass be glad forever; rain nor sun Comfort their cankered face and hardening heart,

Nor hand that tilled or foot that trod of

Pass and not curse them. Let me look but once

Upon this hill whereon till this ninth

Mine enemies' hands have crucified my heart.

The sun burns yet, and the stream runs;

Nor ear have these nor pity. Come, I talk,

Who had no mind; God will not heed me: come. [Exeunt.

Scene IV. — The Camp of the Lords.

Morton, Hume, Lindsay, etc. Morton. What, is the Frenchman gone? Lindsay. With heavy cheer,

By this to set sad foot in Edinburgh.

Morton. There should we be by night
fall; and you see

How the day reddens downward, and this hill

Hath all its west side fiery; he hath done

The queen and us small service, to put off

Her hour of yielding. Look! the last spears left

Begin to move in sunder; there he flies,

The traitor, with his heartless handful backed

That yet for fear cling to him; and on this side

Grange leads her down the hill between our horse,

Who comes not like one captive.

Enter the QUEEN and KIRKALDY.

Queen. Tell me, sirs,

Are they my doomsmen whom I come to find,

And those your headsmen who stand

sworded there And visored soldier-like, that cry on

To burn and slay me? Let me have quick doom,

And be beyond their crying. Morton. Madam, I think

You cannot fear of us a deadly doom, Nor shall you find.—Silence those throats, I say!

Queen. I have not said I feared; nor shall there come

For you that lying breath upon my lips. What will ye do with what of me ye have

If not what these tongues cry for?

Morton. Some man ride, —

You, Laird of Grange, with two or three at back,—

And with the flatlong stroke of your good swords

Smite their mouths dumb. — Madam, take you no heed:

They shall not hurt you.

Queen. Sir, no heed have I;

I think these common haters shall not hurt

Indeed, nor smite me but with tongues; 'tis you,

My good fords only, from whose noble

hands
I look to take my death, who would not

lose Nor lack this royal office. For my

sake

Do them no hurt, I pray, who are but your mouths

As you their hands; I see no choice of

you,

Or them the lesser traitors.

Hume. I will go:

Ride you that way, sir, by their ranks who shout,

As I this side; for every way men hear How the field rings that all the hills roar back

With noise of names and cries to burn the whore

And murderess of her husband: spare no strokes

To shame or smite them silent.

Queen. You, my friends,

Good servants that have care of my good name,

And loyal lovers — of your love and

grace,

May it please you show me whither I must go

To find what face of death? or if yet none,

And yet ye have not the hardy hearts to slay,

To uncrown and slay me, I require you then

Deliver me into my kinsmen's hands Of the house of Hamilton, in whose good ward

I am content to abide men's evil will With honorable surety; which refused, Of life nor honor shall I hold me sure For all your vows and voices, but

My life to be as all your honors, dead.

Morton. Madam, with mocks you

cannot make us mad,
To bring you to their trustless hands
whose ward

Should be to you but dangerous, and to us,

And all this kingdom's hope in heritage,

And all men's good, most mortal. You must go

With us to Edinburgh, and being made safe
Abide the judgment there that shall not

fall

By fierce election of men's clamorous

mouths
Whose rage would damn you to the

fire-clad death,

But by their sentence who shall do no

wrong,

If justice may with honor make them

If justice may with honor make them sure,

And faith defend from error.

Queen. Ay, my lord?

I shall be doomed, then, ere I die, and stand

Before their face for judgment who should kneel

To take my sentence as a scourge, and bear
What brand my tongue set on them?

Nay, ye are mad. Kings have been slain with violence

and red craft,

Or fallen by secret or by popular hands; But what man heard yet ever of a king Set to the bar of his own men, to plead For life with rebels' reasons, and wage

With whoso dare of all these baser born

Rise up to judge him? Surely I shall

Rise up to judge him? Surely I shall die,—

Be rent perchance in pieces of men's fangs,

But of their mouths not sentenced. In fair field

That only steel that bids a king's neck stoop

Is the good sword that in a warlike

hand
Makes his head bow, and cuts not off

his crown But with the stroke of battle: who hath

seen
By doom of man a king's head king-

domless
Bow down to the axe and block? so

base an edge Can bite not on such necks. Let me

bleed here,

By their swift hands who ravin for my blood;

Or be assured how if ye let me live I live to see you die for me as dogs:

Ye shall be hanged on crosses, nailed on rows.

For birds to rend alive; ye shall have

A dog's doom and a traitor's, and the cord

Strangle the sentence in your laboring

And break the plea that heaves your throat, and leaves

Mour tongue thrust forth to blacken: ve shall wage

Words and try causes with the worms and flies

fill they leave bare your bones to sun and wind

As shame shall leave your titles. Was [ To LINDSAY.

That were to fight before me with my lord?

Give me your hand, sir: by this hand of yours

I swear for this thing yet to have your head.

And so thereof assure you. Morton. Bid the camp

Strike, and set forth behind us. Sirs, to horse:

And, madam, be not yet so great of speech

As utterly to outwear your spirit of strength

With pain and passion that can bear no fruit

But wind and wrath and barren bitter-Vex not yourself more than your foes

would vex. Of whom we would be none that ride

with you From them to guard you that would lay red hands

On you yet faint and weak from this

nerce day. Queen. My body and head wax faint,

but not my heart; you,

To burn your strengths up that my feebler limbs

Can make my heart not yield to nor bow down,

Nor fear put out its fires. worthy lords,

And lead me to my loving town again, That bears your heads not yet above its gates

Where I shall see them festering if I live. Exeunt.

SCENE V. - EDINBURGH: A ROOM IN THE PROVOST'S HOUSE.

Enter MAITLAND and PROVOST. Maitland. Are the gates fast?

Provost. Ay; but the street yet seethes

With ebb and flow of fighting faces thronged,

And crush of onset following on her

Where she came in, and whence at her own call

You drove them off her; and above the ranks Flaps the flag borne before her as she

came. Wrought with the dead king's likeness;

and their cry Is yet to burn or drown her. It were

A manlike mercy now for men to show,

That she should have some woman's hand of hers To tend her fainting who should be

nigh dead With fear and lack of food and weari-

Maitland. Nay, if she die not till she die for fear,

She must outlive man's memory: twice or thrice

As she rode hither with that sable flag Blown overhead whereon the dead man

Painted, and by him beneath a garden

His young child kneeling, with soft hands held up,

I have yet there fire enough for all of And the word underwritten of his prayer, -

Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord, - she seemed

At point to swoon, being sick with two days' fast,

And with faint fingers clung upon the rein,

And gaped as one athirst with foodless lips
And fair head fainting; but for very

scorn

Was straightway quickened and uplift of heart,

And smote us with her eyes again, and spoke

No weaker word but of her constant

To hang and crucify, when time should be,

These now her lords and keepers; so at last

Beneath these walls she came in with the night,

So pressed about with foes that man by

We could but bring her at a foot's pace through

Past Kirk of Field between the roaring streets,

Faint with no fear, but hunger and great rage,
With all men's wrath as thunder at her

With all men's wrath as thunder at her heel,

And all her fair face foul with dust and tears,

But as one fire of eye and cheek that shone

With heat of fiery heart and unslaked will

That took no soil of fear.

Provost. What shall be done

When sentence shall pass on her?

Maitland. By my will,

She shall not die, nor lose her royal name,

Wherein the council only shall bear rule,
And take to its own hand the care to

On her false lord now fled our general wrong.

Who being but overtaken of its sword Shall be divorced at once from her and life.

Provost. But this shall not content the common will,

Nor theirs who bind and loose it with their tongues

And cry now for her blood; the town is loud

With women's voices keener than of men To call for judgment on her and swift death

Sharp as their anger.

Maitland. Ay, the time is mad

With noise of preachers and the feminine spleen

That of mere rage and blind mobility Barks in brute heat for blood; but on

these tongues
The state yet hangs not, nor the general
weal

Is swayed but by the violent breath of these.

Here sits she safe.

Provost. I would I knew it; her mood

Is as a wind that blows upon a fire,

And drives her to and fro: she will not eat,

But rages here and there, and cries again
On us for traitors, on her friends for

help, On God for comfort of her cause and

crown
That of his foes and hers is violated,

And will not stint her clamors, not take rest,

For prayer nor bidding.

Maitland. I will speak with her

Ere I go hence; though she were mild of mood.

The task were hard with Knox for opposite

To bend the council to such policy

As might assure her but of life, which thus

She whets the weapon in his tongue to take. [Exeunt.

Scene VI. — Another Room in the same.

The QUEEN and an ATTENDANT. Queen. Wilt thou be true? but if thou have not heart, Yet do not, being too young to sell man's blood,

Betray my letter to mine enemies' hands Where it should be a sword to smite me with;

If thou lack heart, I say, being but a boy,

Swear not and break thine oath: but if thou have,

Thou shalt not ask, for this mine errand done,

The thing I will not give thee. At Dunbar

Bring but this letter to my husband's hand;

Spare for no speed; if it were possible, I would it might be with him ere day

On me condemned of men. I have no hope,

Thou seest, but in thee only: thou art

And mean of place, but be thou good to me

And thou shalt sit above thy masters

And nobles gray in honor. Wilt thou go? Have here mine only jewel, and my faith

That I plight to thee, when my hand may choose,

To give thee better gifts. Haste, and so thrive

As I by thee shall. [Exit Attendant. Though thou play me false,

Thou dost no more than God has done with me,

And all men else before thee: yet I

could not

But write this worthless one word of

my love,
Though I should die for writing it in

vain,
And he should never read it.

Enter MAITLAND.

Come you not To tell me of my commons and your friends,

That by their will despite you I must die?

It were no stranger now than all things are

That fall as on me dreaming.

Maitland. Madam, no:

I come to plead with you for your own life,

Which wrath and violent mood would cast away.

Queen. What is my life to any man or me
As ye have made it? If ye seek not

that, Why have ye torn me from my hus-

band's hand, With whom ye know that I would live

and die
With all content that may be in the
world?

world?

Maitland. For your own honor have
we sundered you.

You know not him, who late writ word

— myself

Can show this letter — to the Lady Jane,

She was his wife and you his concubine, No more but sport and scandal in his sheets,

And loved for use but as a paramour, And for his ends to rise and by your

Be kissed into a kingdom; and each week

Since they were first but as in show divorced

And but of craft divided, on some days Have they held secret commerce to your shame

As wedded man and wife. *Queen*. There is one thing

That I would ask of even such friends

as you, —
To turn me with my lord adrift at sea,

And make us quit of all men.

Maitland. For yourself,

You drive on no less danger here of wreck,

Seeing for your life if England take no care

care France will nor strike nor speak; and

had you not In your own kindly kingdom yet some

friends Whose hearts are better toward you,

whose hearts are better toward you these wot well

You have none left you helpful in the world.

Yet what we may will I and all these

To serve you in this strait; so for this night

Let not your peril, which can breed not fear,

For that breed anger in you; and farewell. [Exit.]

Queen. None but such friends? O yet my living lord,

yet my living lord,
O still my comfort, hadst thou none

but me
As I save thee have no man, we would

go
Hand fact in hand to dreadless death

Hand fast in hand to dreadless death, and see

With such clear eyes as once our marriage-bed

Fire, or the sword's light lifted to make

Of that one life on both our lips that laughed

To think he could not sunder them who smote.

Nor change our hearts who chilled them; we would kiss,

Laugh, and lie down, and sleep: but here in bonds

I will not tamely like a dumb thing die That gives its blood and speaks not. If I find

No faith in all this people, yet my

Shall through this casement cry in all their ears

That are made hard against me. — Ho there! you,

All that pass by, your queen am I that call:

Have I no friend of all you to turn back

The swords that point on this bare

breast, the hands
That grasp and hale me by the hair to

death,

By this discrowned rent hair that wore

By this discrowned rent hair that wore too soon

The kingdom's weight of all this land in gold?

Have I no friend? no friend?

Voice without. Ay, here was one;

Know you yet him? - Raise up the banner there,

That she may look upon her lord, and take

Comfort.

A Woman. What! was not this that kneels the child

Which hung once at that harlot's breast now bare,

And should have drunk death from its deadly milk?

Hide it for shame; bind up the wanton hair,

Cover the poisonous bosom: here is none

To kiss the print of that adulterer's head

Which last lay on it.

Another Voice. Whither is he flown, Whose amorous lips were bloody, and

left red

The shameless cheek they fed on as with shame?

Where is your swordsman at your back to guard

And make your sin strut kinglike? where his hand

That made this dead man's child kneel fatherless,

And plead with God against you for his blood?

Where is your king-killer? Queen. The day shall be

That I will make this town a fire, and slake

The flame with blood of all you: there shall stand

No mark of man, no stone of these its walls,

To witness what my wrath made ruin of

That turned it first to smoke, and then put out

With all your blood its ashes.

Enter Provost.

Hear you, sir, How we are handled of our townsfolk

there,
Being yet in ward of you? but by my
head.

If now by force it fall not, you as these Shall buy this of me bloodily, and first

Shall bleed of all whose lives will pay not me. Provost. Madam, as you desire to see that day,

Contain yourself: this flame whereon

you blow

Will fasten else untimely on your hand, And leave it harmless toward us. I beseech you,

Though but for hate of us and hope to hurt,

Eat, and take rest.

Queen. I will not: what are ye,

That I should care for hate of you to live

Who care not for the love's sake of my life?

If I shall die here in your hateful hands, In God's I put my cause, as into them I yield the spirit that dares all enemies

yet
By force to take it from me. Die or

live

I needs must at their bidding; but to sleep,

sleep, Eat, drink, weep, laugh, speak or keep

silence, these
They shall not yet command me till I
die.

[Exeunt.

SCENE VII. - THE HIGH STREET.

A Crowd of CITIZENS.

First Citizen. Who says she shall not die?

Second Citizen. Even he that stands First in this city, Morton: by his doom, Death shall not pass upon her. First Citizen. Will he say it?

Yet is this man not all the tongue or

That Scotland has to speak or smite with.

Third Citizen. Nay,

When he so spake against their honest voice

Who called for judgment, one arose that said —

I know not who, but one that spake for God—

That he who came between God's sword and her

Should as a stayer of justice by the sword

Be stricken of God's justice.

First Citizen. What said he? Third Citizen. No word, but frowned; and in his eye and cheek

There sprang a fire, and sank again, as 'twere

For scorn that anger should have leave to speak,

Though silently; but Maitland writhed his lip,

And let his teeth grin doglike, and between

There shot some snarling word that mocked at God,

And at the servants of his wrath, who wait

To see his will done on her, and men's

hands
Made ministers to set it forth so broad

That none might pass and read not.

Second Citizen. Why, by this Part hangs of it already in men's sight: I have word here from Dunbar, of one

I have word here from Dunbar, of one that was An officer of Bothwell's, and alive

Laird of Blackadder, whom they seized

Flying from death to deathward, and brought back

To be nigh rent in pieces of their hands
Who haled him through the streets to
hang, and left

Not half a man unbroken or unbruised To feel the grip o' the gallows.

First Citizen. They did well: Shall we do worse, that have within our

The heart and head of all this evil, her By whom all guilt looks guiltless till she

A whore's death or a murderer's, burn or drown,

And leave more free the common doom of man

To pass on lesser sins? While she doth live,

How should it speak for shame to bid men die

For what sin done soever, who might

She lives and laughs yet in God's face and eye,

And finds on earth no judgment as do these

Whose bloodiest hands are whiter than her soul?

Let her die first.

Third Citizen. Ay shall she, if God

Upon those lips that never lacked it yet His fire to burn men's hearts, and make that tongue

His sword that hath been ever. Yes-

ternight

Came Knox to Edinburgh, and here should speak

By this among us of the doom to fall On us or her, that if it bruise her not Must glance aside against us.

Second Citizen. He is here.

Draw nigh, but make no noise. Enter JOHN KNOX. First Citizen. Nay, all the press

Heaves round about him silent. Others. Sirs, give place;

Make way for Master Knox to stand and speak

Here in your midst; here is it higher; give way.

Make room to hear him. Peace there, and stand still.

John Knox. What word is this that ye require of man?

Ye that would hear me, what speech heard of mine

Should lift your hearts up if they sit not high, -

If they lack life, should quicken? for this day

Ye know not less than I know that the Lord

Hath given his enemy to you for a

His judgment for a fire: what need have ye,

Or he what need of other tongues to speak

Than this which burns all ears that hear on earth

The blast of this day's justice blown in heaven -

As where is he that hears not? In your hand

Lies now the doom of God to deal, and

Before your face to abide it, in whose mouth

His name was as a hissing; and had I The tongues in mine of angels, and their might,

What other word or mightier should I seek

Than this to move you? or, should ye wax cold,

What fuel should I find out to kindle you?

If God ye hear not, how shall ye hear me?

Or if your eyes be sealed to know not

If she be fit to live or no, can I

With words unseal them? None sc young of you

But hath long life enough to understand And reason to record what he hath seen Of hers and of God's dealings mutually Since she came in. Then was her spirit made soft,

Her words as oil, and with her amorous

She caught men's eyes to turn them where she would,

And with the strong sound of her name of queen

Made their necks bend; that even of God's own men There were that bade refuse her not

her will, Deny not her, fair woman and great

queen, Her natural freedom born, to give Go I praise

What way she would, and pray what prayers; though these

Be as they were, to God abominable And venomous to men's souls. So came there back

The cursed thing cast forth of u; and so

Out of her fair face and imperious eyes Lightened the light whereby men walk in hell.

And I that sole stood out, and bade not

The lightning of this curse come down

on us And fly with feet as fire on all winds blown

To burn men's eyes out that beheld God's face,

That being long blind but now gat sight, and saw,

And praised him seeing; I that then spake and said.

spake and said,
Ten thousand men here landed of our

Were not so fearful to me on her side As one mass said in Scotland; that withstood

The man to his face I loved, her father's son,

Then mastered by the pity of her, and made

Through that good mind not good, — who then but I

Was taxed of wrongful will, and for hard heart

Miscalled of men? And now, sirs, if

her prayer Were just and reasonable, and unjust I That bade shut ears against it; if the

Hath brought forth innocent fruit, and in this land

Wherein she came to stablish it again Hath stablished peace with honor; if in her

It hath been found no seed of shame, and she

That loved and served it seem now in men's sight

No hateful thing nor fearful; if she stand

Such a queen proven as should prove honorable The rule of women, and in her that

thing
Be shown forth good that was called

evil of me,
Blest and not curst,—then have I

sinned, and they
That would have crossed me would

have crossed not God: Whereof now judge ye. Hath she

brought with her
Peace, or a sword? and since her in-

coming
Hath the land sat in quiet, and the

men Seen rest but for one year? or came not in

Behind her feet, right at her back, and shone

Above her crowned head as a fierier crown,

Death, and about her as a raiment wrapt

Ruin? and where her foot was ever turned

Or her right hand was pointed, hath there fallen

No fire, no cry burst forth of war, no sound

As of a blast blown of an host of men For summons of destruction? Hath God shown

For sign she had found grace in his sight, and we

For her sake favor, while she hath reigned on us,

One hour of good, one week of rest, one day?

Or hath he sent not for an opposite sign

Dissensions, wars, rumors of wars, and change,

Flight and return of men, terror with power,
Triumph with trembling? Hath one

foot stood fast,
One head not bowed, one face not
veiled itself,

One hand not hidden? Was this once

That ye beheld, this brief while of her reign,

Strong men one day make mouths at God, the next
Lie where his foes lie fallen? or since

she came
Have ye seen raised up of them and
cast down

But one or two that served her?
Which of these,

Which of them all that looked on her and loved,

And men spake well of them, and pride and hope

Were as their servants, — which of all them now

Shall men speak well of? How fared he the first

Hailed of his own friends and elect her lord.

Who gave her kinsmen heart and god less hope

By him to reign in her and wield this land. Yet once with me took counsel and

sought grace, And suddenly God left him, and he

Brain-smitten, with no bride-bed now nor throne

To conquer, but go senseless to his grave,

broken-witted Hamilton, - what end.

Think ye, had this man? Or what hope and hap

The next whose name met on men's lips with hers.

And ballads mourned him in his love's sight slain, -

Gordon, that in the dawn of her dark day

Rose northward as a young star fiery red.

Flashed in her face, and fell, for her own breath

Quenched him? What good thing gat they for her sake,

These that desired her, yet were mighty lords.

Great in account of great men? So they twain

Perished: and on men meaner far than these

When this queen looked, how fared they? folk that came With wiles and songs and sins from

oversea, With harping hands and dancing feet,

and made Music and change of phrases in her ear, -

White rose out of the south, star out of France,

Light of men's eyes and love! yea, verily,

Red rose out of the pit, star out of hell, Fire of men's eyes and burning! for the first

Was caught as in a chamber snare, and

Smiling, and died with Farewell, the most fair

world .-

With suchlike psalms go suchlike soul: to God

Naked, - and in his blood she washed her feet

Who sat and saw men spill it; and this reward

Had this man of his dancing. For the next,

On him ye know what hand was last year laid, -

David, the close tongue of the Pope, the hand That held the key of subtle and secret

craft

As of his viol, and tuned all strings of

With cunning finger; not the foot o' the king

Before God's ark when Michal mocked at him

Danced higher than this man's heart for confidence

To bring from Babylon that ark again Which he that touches, he shall surely die. -

But not the death of Uzzah; for thereon

God's glory rests not, but the shadow of death,

And dead men's bones within it: yet his trust

Was to lift up again and to relume

The tabernacle of Moloch, and the star Of Remphan, figures which our fathers made,

That such as he might go before, and play On timbrels and on psalteries and on

harps, On cornets and on cymbals; and the

Lord Brake him; and she being wroth at

God took thought How they that saw might call his place

of death

The breach of David, and her heart waxed hot

Till she should make a breach upon his

As God on him, and with a dire new

And the most cruel princess in the And a new memory quite put out that name

And memory of his slaying; yea, all this land,

That hath seen evil of many men before And sins of many years, hath seen till now

No sin as hers, nor on her forefathers Whose hands were red and their hearts hard hath seen

The note of such an evil as in her heart

Became a fire conceiving, and brought forth

The deed that in her hand was as a sword

New tempered in that fire. For no such deed

Was this as all theirs who play false or slay,

Take gifts for whoredom, or lay snares to kill;

But she gave gifts to hire her lover's knife

That it might pierce her husband: even this land—

This earth whereof our living limbs are made,

This land renewed of God, this earth redeemed,

With all souls born therein to worship him
That call it mother—was the hire she

gave To fee the adulterer's hand when it

should rise Against her lord to slay him; yea, all

of you,
And each part of this kingdom, and
each man

That but draws breath within her range of reign,

Were parcel of this hire, as counted coins

To make the sum up of her goodly gift. And he that of their hands was bought and sold,

Her wedded husband, that had bowed his head

Before her worshipped idol, — think ye not

That by her hand God gave him all his wage

Who was a less thing in his eyes than she,

And viler than her service? for the fire Fell not from heaven that smote him, yet not less

Was kindled of God's wrath than of man's hate,

And in a woman's craft his will put forth

To make her sin his judgment. But of these,

The slain and slayer, the spoiler and the spoiled,

That each have lain down by her wedded side.

Which will ye say hath slept within her bed

A sleep more cursed, and from more evil dreams

Found a worse waking? he that with a blast

Which rent the loud night as a cry from hell

Was blown forth darkling from her sheets, or he

That shared and soiled them till this day whereon

God casts him out upon the track of
Cain
To flee forever with uncleansed red

hands,
And seek and find not where in the
waste world

To hide the wicked writing on his brow Till God rain death upon him? for his foot,

Be sure, shall find no rest, his eye no sleep,

His head no covert and his heart no hope,
His soul no harbor and his face no

light; But as a hound the wolf that bleeds to

death God's wrath shall hunt him through

the dark, and fear Shall go before him as a cloud by day,

By night a fire, but comfort not his head

By day with shadow, nor with shine by

Guide lest his foot be dashed against a stone,

But in fair heaven before the morning's face

Make his air thick with thunder, and put out

All lamplike eyes of stars that look on

Till he lie down blind in the dust, and

Or if God haply give his lightnings

charge
They hurt him not, and bid his wind pass by

And the stroke spare him of the bolted

cloud,
Then seeing himself cast out of all that live,

But not of death accepted, everywhere An alien soul and shelterless from God, He shall go mad with hate of his own soul,

Of God and man and life and death,

A loathlier life and deadlier than the

That feeds on death, and when it rots

Curse God and die. Such end have these that loved:

And she that was beloved, what end shall she?

What think ye yet would God have done with her.

Who puts her in our hand to smite or spare

That hath done all this wickedness? For these,

What were they but as shadows in the sun

Cast by her passing, or as thoughts that fled

Across her mind of evil, types and signs

Whereby to spell the secret of her soul Writ by her hand in blood? What power had they,

What sense, what spirit, that was not given of her,

Or what significance or shape of life Their act or purpose, formless else and void,

Save as her will and present force of

Gave breath to them and likeness? None of these

Hath done or suffered evil save for her,

Who was the spring of each man's deed or doom

And root for each of death, and in his hand

The sword to die by and the sword to

The sword to die by and the sword to slay.

Shall this be left then paled in the

Shall this be left, then, naked in the world

For him that will to stab our peace to death?

What blood is this drips from the point, what sign,

What scripture is enamelled on the blade?

Lo, this fair steel forged only to divide This land from truth, and cut her soul in twain,

To cleave the cords in sunder that hold fast

Our hope to heaven and tie our trust to God, —

Here by the hilt we hold it, and well know

That if we break not, this now blunted edge,

Being newly ground and sharpened of men's hands That watch if ours will yet loose hold

of it, Shall pierce our own hearts through

Ay, be ye sure,
If ye bid murder and adultery live,

They live not stingless; not a Scot that breathes,

No man of you nor woman, but hath part

In each her several sin and punishment That ye take off from her. But what are these

That with their oaths or arms would fence her round,
And hide her from God's lightnings?

Know they not

— Or if they know not, will ye too be blind? —

What end that Lord who hath bowed so many a head,

So many and mighty, of those her former friends,

Hath power to make of these men? Shall they stand,

Because they have done God service while they would,

And cease to serve him? or their good deeds past

Who served not God as Job forsooth for naught
Sustain their feet from falling?

Sustain their feet from Strength nor craft,

Nor praise nor fear nor faith nor love of men,

Shall be for buckler to them, nor his name

A helm of vantage for the Douglas' head

If he make stiff against the yoke of God

Too proud a neck, that for the curb cast off

May feel the weight and edge that iron hath,

To check high minds and chasten; nor

Nor subtle tongue shall be for Lethington

But as a pointless and unfeathered shaft Shot heavenward without hurt, that falls again

In the archer's eye to pierce it; and his lips

That were so large of mockery when God spake,

By present organ of his works and wrath

And tongueless sound of justice audible,

Shall drink the poison of their words again,

And their own mocks consume them; and the mouth

That spat on Christ, now pleading for his foes,

Be stricken dumb as dust. Then shall one say,

Seeing these men also smitten, as ye now

Seeing them that bled before to do her

Seeing them that bled before to do her good,

God is not mocked; and ye shall surely know

What men were these and what man he that spake

The things I speak now prophesying, and said

That if he spare to shed her blood for shame,

For fear or pity of her great name or face,

God shall require of you the innocent

Shed for her fair face' sake, and from your hands

Wring the price forth of her bloodguiltiness. Nay, for ye know it, nor have I need

again To bring it in your mind if God ere

now
Have borne me witness: in that dreary

day When men's hearts failed them for pure

grief and fear
To see the tyranny that was, and rule

Of this queen's mother, where was no light left

But of the fires wherein his servants died,

I bade those lords that clave in heart to God,

And were perplexed with trembling and with tears, Lift up their hearts, and fear not; and

they heard
What some now hear no more, the
word I spake

Who have been with them, as their own souls know,

In their most extreme danger: Cowper Moor,
Saint Johnston, and the Crags of Edin-

burgh,
Are recent in my heart; yea, let these know.

That dark and dolorous night wherein all they

With shame and fear were driven forth of this town Is yet within my mind; and God for-

bid
That ever I forget it. What, I say,

Was then my exhortation, and what

Of all God ever promised by my

Is fallen in vain, they live to testify

Of whom not one that then was doomed to death

Is perished in that danger; and their foes,

How many of these hath God before their eyes

Plague-stricken with destruction! lo the thanks

They render him, now to betray his Put in their hands to stablish; even

that God's That kept them all the darkness through

to see

Light, and the way that some now see no more,

But are gone after light of the fen's

And walk askant in slippery ways; but

ye Know if God's hand have ever when I spake

Writ liar upon me, or with adverse proof

Turned my free speech to shame; for in my lips

He put a word, and knowledge in my

heart. When I was fast bound of his enemies' hands

An oarsman on their galleys, and beheld

From off the sea whereon I sat in chains

The walls wherein I knew that I there bound

Should one day witness of him; and this pledge

Hath God redeemed not? Nay then, in God's name,

If that false word fell unfulfilled of mine. Heed ye not now nor hear me when

Isav That for this woman's sake shall God

cut off The hand that spares her as the hand

that shields. And make their memory who take part

with her As theirs who stood for Baal against

the Lord With Ahab's daughter; for her reign and end

Shall be like Athaliah's, as her birth Was from the womb of Jezebel, that slew

The prophets, and made foul with blood and fire

The same land's face that now her seed makes foul

With whoredoms and with witchcrafts: yet they say

Peace, where is no peace, while the adulterous blood

Feeds yet with life and sin the murderous heart

That hath brought forth a wonder to the world

And to all time a terror; and this blood The hands are clean that shed, and they that spare

In God's just sight spotted as foul as Cain's.

If then this guilt shall cleave to you or no.

And to your children's children, for her sake,

Choose ye; for God needs no man that is loath

To serve him, and no word but his own work To bind and loose their hearts who

hear and see Such things as speak what I lack words

to say. First Citizen. She shall not live.

Second Citizen. If by their mouths today

She be set free from death, then by our hands

She dies to-morrow.

Voices in the crowd. Nay, to fire with

Fire for the murderess! cast her bones in the lake!

Burn, burn and drown! She shall not live to-night.

Scene VIII. - A ROOM IN THE PRO-VOST'S HOUSE.

The QUEEN, ATHOL, and MORTON. Queen. I will not part from hence: here will I see

What man dare do upon me. Athol. Hear you not

How the cry thickens for your blood This night

Scarce has time left to save you.

Oueen. I will die.

Morton. Madam, your will is no more now the sword

That cuts all knots in sunder: you must live,

And thank the force that would not give you leave

To give your foes the blood they seek to spill.

Here every hour's is as an arrow's flight

Winged for your heart; if in these clamorous walls

You see this darkness by the sun cast

You will not see his light go down

Queen. What men are ye then, that have made my life

Safe with your oaths, that walled it round with words,

Fenced it with faith, and fortressed it with air

Made of your breaths and honors? When ye swore,

I knew the lie's weight on your lips, and took

My life into mine hand; I had no thought

To live or ride among you but to death, And whither ye have led me, to what end.

Nor I nor God knows better than I knew

Then when ye swore me safe; for then as now

I knew your faith was lighter than my

And my life's weight a straw's weight in the wind

Of your blown vows. Pledge me your faith to this,

That I shall die to-night if I go forth. And if I stay live safe, and I will

In trust to live, being here assured to

Morton. We swore to save you as you swore again

To cast the traitor from you, and divorce

his:

And with that hand you wrote to him last night

Vows of your love and constant heart till death

As his true wife to serve and cleave to him. The boy that should have borne your

letter lacked Faith to be trusty to your faithless

trust,

And put it in our hand. Queen. Why, so I thought:

I knew there was no soul between these walls. Of child or man, that had more faith

than ve

Who stand their noblest; nor shall one soul breathe.

If here ye put not out my present life, When I come back, that shall not burn on earth

Ere hell take hold of it. Morton. It is well seen.

Madam, that fear nor danger can pluck forth Your tongue that strikes men mad with

love or scorn, Taunted or tempted; yet it shall not

Death from men's hands untimely:

what was sworn, That you should live, shall stand; and

that it may, To-night must you part hence; this lord and I

Will bring you through to Holyrood afoot,

And be your warders from the multitude

As you pass forth between us; thence to Leith.

And there shall you take water, and ere dawn

Touch at Burntisland, whence some twenty miles

Shall bear you to Lochleven and safe guard

On the Fife border. He that has your charge

Is one not trusted more than tried of us, —

Your hand forever from the blood on Sir William Douglas; in whose moth er's ward

At Kinross there shall you abide what

God shall ordain of troubles. At this

No kindlier guard or trustier could

The life we pluck out of the popular mouth

That roars agape to rend it. You must

Queen. Must I not too go barefoot? Being your queen,

Ye do me too much grace: I should be

In bonds between you, with my written

Pinned to my forehead, and my naked shame

Wrapt in a shameful sheet: so might I pass,

If haply I might pass at all alive

Forth of my people's justice, to salute With seemly show of penance her chaste eyes

Whom ye have chosen for guard upon her queen

And daughter of the king her para-

Whose son being called my brother I must call,

Haply, to win her favor and her son's, And her good word with him as mediatress,

My father's harlot mother. Verily, Ye are worthy guardians of fair fame, and friends

Fit to have care of reputation, men That take good heed of honor; and the state

That hath such counsellors to comfort it Need fear no shame nor stain of such reproach

As makes it shrink when with her

lords' good will, Advised of all tongues near her and

approved, A queen may wed the worthiest born of men

Her subjects, and a warrior take to wife One that being widowed of his hand and help

Were such a thing as I am. From my lord

I held my kingdom: now my hand lacks his,

What queen am I, and what slaves ye, that throng

And threat my life with vassals, to make vile

Its majesty foregone with abject fear Of my most abject? Yet though I lack

might Save of a woman friendless and in

bonds. My name and place yet lack not, nor the state

And holy magic that God clothes withal The naked word of king or queen, and keeps

In his own shadow, hallowed in his hand.

Such heads unarmed as mine, that men may smite

But no man can dis-hallow. In this faith.

Not to your faith I yield myself for fear,

But gladly to that God's who made of

What ye nor no man mightier shall unmake, -

Your queen and mistress. Lead me through my streets, Whose stones are tongues now crying

for my blood, To my dead fathers' palace, that hath

oped On many kings and traitors. It may be

I shall not see these walls and gates again

That cast me out; but if alive or dead I come back ever to require my part

And place among my fathers, on my tomb

Or on my throne shall there stand graved for aye

The living word of this day's work and that

Which is to wreak me on it; and this town

Whence I go naked in mine enemies' hands

Shall be the flame to light men's eyes that read

What was endured and what revenged of me.

# ACT V. - THE QUEEN.

Time: From July 20, 1567, to May 16, 1568.

#### Scene I. - Holyrood.

MORTON and MAITLAND.

Morton. I know not yet if we did well to lay

Well to lay

No public note of murder on the queen In this our proclamation that sets forth But the pare justice of our cause, and right

We had to move against her; while

her act

Stands yet unproven, and seen but by surmise, —

Though all but they that will not seem to know

May know the form and very life of

it, —
She hath a sword against us and a stay

In the English hearts and envious hands that wait

To strike at us, and take her name to

gild

And edge the weapon of their evil will Who only are our enemies, and stand Sole friends of hers on earth; for France, we see,

Will be no screen nor buckler for her,

though
Fire were now lit to burn her body, or

Ground sharp to shear her neck: from Catherine's mouth

Had Murray not assurance, and from

Have we not word that France will stir no foot

To save or spill her blood? England alone

By her new-lighted envoy sends rebuke Made soft and mixed with promise and with pledge

Of help and comfort to her against our

Who by this messenger imperiously
Are taxed and threatened as her traitors: this

Must we now answer with a brow as free

And tongue as keen, seeing how his queen in him

Desires the charge and wardship of our prince

Which we must nowise grant.

Maitland. For fear's sake, no,

Nor for her threats, which rather may pluck on

More present peril, of more fiery foot, To the queen's life; yet surer might we stand

Having the crown's heir safe and girt about

With foreign guard in a strange land, than here Rocked in the roar of factions, his frail

Rocked in the ro head

Pillowed on death and danger; which once crushed,

And that thin life cut off, what hand puts forth

To take the crown up by successive right

But theirs that would even now dip

In the dear heart's blood of their kinswoman,

That it might take this kingdom by the throat
When she were slain? and rather by

our mean
Would they procure her slaying than

by their own

Make swift the death which they desire

for her, And from our hands with craft would draw it down

By show of friendship to her and threat of arms

That menace us with mockery and false fear
Of her deliverance by their swords,

whose light Being drawn and shining in our eyes

should scare
Our hearts with doubt of what might

fall if she Stood by their help rekingdomed, and

impel
Even in that fear our hands to spill her
blood

That lag too long behind their wish,

Till seeing her slain of us they may rise

Heirs of her cause and lineage, and reclaim

By right of blood and justice and revenge

The crown that drops from Stuart to Hamilton

With no more let or thwart than a child's life

Whose length should be their pleasure's and with these Against our cause will England league

herself

If yet the queen live prisoner of our hands,

And these her kin draw swords for her; but they,

Though England know not of it, nor have eye

To find their drift, would mix their

cause with ours,

If from the queen's head living we

should pluck

The royal office, and as next in blood Instate them regents; who would reign indeed

Rather by death's help, if they might, and build

On her child's grave and hers their regency,

Than rule by deputation; yet at need Will be content by choice or leave of us To take the delegated kingdom up

And lack but name of king: which being installed

I doubt they think not long to lack, or live

Its patient proxies ever. So the land, Shaken and sundered, looks from us to these,

From these again to us-ward, and hears blown

Upon the light breath of the doubtful hour

Rumors of fear which swell men's hearts with wrath

To hear of southern wars and counsels hatched

That think with fright to shrink them up, and bind

Their blood's course fast with threats. Let England know, Her menace that makes cold no vein of ours

May heat instead the centre and the

Of this land's pulse with fire, and in that flame

The life we seek not and the crown it wears

Consume together. France will rest our friend,

Whether the queen find grace to live in bonds,
Or bleed beneath our judgment; he

that comes
On errand thence to reconcile with

us

Her kin that stand yet on the adverse

part
Hath but in charge to do her so much

good
As with our leave he may, and break

As with our leave he may, and break no bond

That holds us firm in friendship; if we will,

She may be held in ward of France.

and live
Within the bound there of a convent

wall
Till death redeem her; but howe'er he

speed
Who hath commission with what power
he may

To make of our twain factions one such league

As may stand fast and perfect friend with France,

And in what wise by grace of us he may

To do our prisoner service and entreat That grace to drop upon her, this main charge

He needs must keep, to hold allied in

Scotland and France, and let our hand not plight

Fresh faith instead with England; so for us

From France looks forth no danger though she die,

For her no help; and these void English threats,

That bring no force to back them but their own

And find not us unfriended, do but

The embers that her life still treads upon

Which being enkindled shall devour it.

Morton. Ay,

And each day leaves them redder from the breath

That through the land flies clamorous for her blood

From lips which boast to bear upon them laid

The live coal burning of the word that God

Gives them to speak against her; the south towns

Are full of tongues that cry on our delay

To purge the land plague-stricken with her life; He first who never feared the face of

man, John Knox, and Craig his second, fill

men's ears
With words as arrows edged and winged

to slay;
And all the wide-mouthed commons,

and more loud
The women than their men, stretch
their shrill throats

With cries for judgment on her: and herself,

As parcel of the faction for her death, Takes part with them against her friends, and swears

To the English envoy who was charged by stealth

To plead with her for mercy on her life And privily persuade her, as we find,

To cast out Bothwell from her secret thought,

She would die first ere so divorce her soul

From faith and hope that hangs on him, and feeds

Her constant spirit with comfort which sustains

His child alive within her; for she thinks Haply to move men's hearts even by

the plea
That hardens them against her, being

That hardens them against her, being believed,

For the false fruit's sake of her fatal womb,

The seed of Bothwell, that with her should burn

Rather than bring forth shame, and in this land

Become a root of wars unborn and fire Kindled among our children. Maitland. Nay, this plea

Can be but somewhile to defend her life,

And put back judgment: never could she think,

Though love made witless whom the world found wise,

His seed might reign in Scotland.

Morton. We are not

So barren of our natural brood of kings As to be grafted from so vile a stock, Though he were now out off who grows

Though he were now cut off who grows yet green

Upon the stem so shaken and pierced through
With cankers now that gnaw the grain

away. Nor if the child whom, whatsoe'er

he be, We for the kingdom's comfort needs must seem

To take for true-begotten, and receive As issued of her husband's kingly blood, Should live not to take up with timely hand

The inheritance whereto we hold him born;

Should the crown therefore by his death derive

To the queen's kin, or hand of Hamil-

ton
Assume the state and sway that slides

from his,—
His father hath a brother left alive,

The younger son of Lennox, who might

More hopefully his nephew's title on

Than leave it for the spoil of hungry hands That would make war upon our present

state,

Unseat the rule of stablished things

Unseat the rule of stablished things, unmake

The counsel and the creed whereby we stand,

And Scotland with us, firm of foot and free

Against the whole face of the weaponed world:

But this boy's crown shall be a golden ring

To hoop and hold our state and strength in one,

And with the seemly name of king make sure

The rent bulk of our laboring commonwealth,

And solder its flawed sides; his right of reign

Is half our gift who reign in him, and half

His heritage of blood, whose lineal name

Shall not by note of usurpation strike With strangeness or offence the world's wide ear

That hears a Stuart our prince's uncle

crowned In the dead child's succession, and this

Made safe in him and stable to sustain
What chance abroad may range or
breed at home

Of force to shake it.

Maitland. While the child lives yet,
A nearer hope than of his father's
kin

Looks fairer on us; yet in that life's wreck

This rope might hold at need. *Morton*. Ay, or we fall,

Who stand against the house of Hamilton

In this man's name, — his kinsman Ruthven, Mar,

Myself and Athol, who sustain his cause Against their part alone.

Maitland. So do you well;

Yet had I rather on the queen's appeal, In her dead father's and her young child's name

Pleading for life, with proffer to resign Her kingdom to the council's hands or his

Whom it may mark for regent, she

Even yet our titular queen, and in her

The council govern of our trustiest heads;
While in safe ward of England or of

France,
Far from his kindred, might her son

grow safe, And under strange and kindlier suns

his strength Wax ripe to bear a kingdom. To this

end,
Save Bothwell's life I see no present

let, Who lives her shame and danger, but

being slain
Takes off from her the peril of men's
tongues,

And her more perilous love that while he lives

It seems will never slacken till her life Be made a prey for his, but in his death Dies, or lives stingless after: wherefore most

It now imports us to lay hand on him, And on that capture to proclaim divorce

Between them ere he die, as presently His death should seal it and his blood

subscribe.
So might she live, and bring against our cause

No blame of men or danger.

Morton. In my mind,
Better it were to crown her son for king,

And send her for safe keeping hence in guard

To live in England prisoner, while we stand

As safe from her as blameless of her blood,

Who reigning but in name on as should reign

Indeed on all our enemies' hopes, and turn

From us the hopeless hearts of half our friends

For the bare name's sake of her seeming reign

And mask of false-faced empire.

Maitland. As I think,

The main mind of the council will not bend

To any reason on our parts proposed

For her removal hence or titular reign,

Nor with the breath of our advice be

Beside their purpose. If the queen consent

That her son's head be hallowed with her crown,

And hers he bare before him, she shall live.

And that close record of her secret hand.

The proofs and scriptures in her casket locked

That seal her part in Darnley's bloodshedding,

Shall yet lie dumb in darkness; else, I dread.

She shall be tried by witness in them writ.

And each word there be clamorous on men's tongues

As the doom uttered of her present

And not more instant should her judgment be

Than her swift execution; for they think,

I know, to find no safety while she lives:

So that in no case shall she pass alive Out of this realm while power is in their lips

To speed or stay her.

Morton. They shall never think To set before all eyes the whole tale

In popular proof and naked evidence To plead against her: Balfour, that betrayed

Her counsels to us, should then have done more scathe

Than ever he did service. They must know

It were not possible to let this proof Stand in the sun's sight, and such names be read

For partners of her deed and not her

not heard -

cause

To seal some part yet of this secret up -

How dearly Bothwell held those privy scrolls

Preserved as witness to confound at

The main part of his judges, and abash Their sentence with their clear complicity

In the crime sentenced? yea, so dear a

He set on these, that flying for life he sends

Dalgleish his trustiest servant from Dunbar

To bring again from Balfour's hands to

The enamelled casket in whose silver hold

Lay the queen's letters and the bond subscribed

Which at Craigmillar writ a live man dead.

This was a smooth and seasonable For one of so soft spirit and tender

heart To send and seek, for love of good days

gone, A love-gift that his lady brought from

France To hold sweet scents or jewels; and the man

That to his envoy so delivered it,

And sent our council warning to waylav

And where to intercept it, - this was Meet for such trust and amorous offices.

Balfour, that, vielding us the castle

Yields likewise for a sword into our hands

To take by stroke of justice the queen's life

His witness with what words she tempted him

From her own lips, how lovingly and long,

As Huntley's and Argyle's. Have they To kill her husband; yet he durst not; then

What should suffice to show if there be How at her bidding he might well take heart.

She said, to do it; yet he stood fearful off;

Whereat she brake into a glimmering wrath

That called him coward, and bade him live assured,

If his tongue ever let this counsel forth, By her sure mean and suddenly to die.

Maitland. This were a sword to drink her life indeed.

But that my hope is better of the lords Than that their heart is fixed upon her death;

And for the commons and their fiery tongue,

The loud-lipped pilot of their windy will,

This famine of their anger shall feed full.

And slake its present need but with the spoil

Made of the piteous remnants of her faith

By the stout hand here of their friend Glencairn,

Who from this chapel of her palace rends

All holy ornament, grinds down with steel

The images whereon Christ dies in gold,

Unsanctifies her sovereign sanctuary, Unmoulds her God, and mints and marks him new,

And makes his molten chalices run down

Into strange shape and service: this should ease,

Meseems, the hunger of the hate they bear

That creed for which they held her first in hate.

And, for the secular justice to be done
For his death's sake whom all these
loathed alive,

It should content them that the trial has passed

On those we held in hand, and by this test

The man whose marriage masque on that loud night

Was pretext for the queen to lie apart

From the near danger of her husband's bed,

Sebastian, stands approved as innocent And no part of her purpose; while the twain

Who bore the charge that was to load with death

The secret house, and to their master's hands

Consigned the mean of murder, have

The perfect proof of torture, and confessed

In the extreme pang of evidence en-

The utmost of their knowledge.

Morton. These may serve

To allay men's instant angers; but much more

His face should profit us whom France detains

detains
With suit and proffer from the queen-

mother
With all their force and flower of war

To help him to the crown of his own land,

Or throne at least of regency therein, If he will take but France for constant

friend,
And turn our hearts with his from
England: this

Would Catherine give him for his friendship's sake

Who gives her none for all this, but his hope

Cleaves yet to England, though for fraud or fear

Again it fail him. So being foiled and wroth,

He hath, she tells him, a right English heart,

And in that faith withholds him craftily From his desired departure and return,

Which should be more of all this land desired

Than of himself. This Elphinstone that comes

For him from Paris, in his master's

To plead as in her brother's for the queen.

Bears but the name of Murray in his mouth.

Whose present eye and tongue, whose spirit and mind,

Our need of him requires. When their intent

Shall by the lords in council be made known

To him that stands here for Elizabeth, How in her name will he receive the

That but from Murray's lip she thinks to hear,

And then determine with what large response

For peace or war she may resolve herself?

Maitland. If she shall find our coun-

cil one in will

To shed by doom of judgment the queen's blood,

Even by Throgmorton's mouth I am certified

That she will call on France to strike with her For this their sister's sake, and join in

one

Their common war to tread our treason down;

Or, if she find not aid of France, from
Spain
Will she seek help to hold our French

allies With curb and snaffle fast of Spanish

steel,
For fear their powers against her lend
us might

That would not lend against us; she meantime,

While Philip's hand hath France as by the hair,

Shall loosen on us England, to redeem
That forfeit life which till the day of
fight

Her trust is but in Murray to preserve, Seeing he spake never word in English ear

Against this queen his sister.

Morton. Being returned,

He shall bear witness if his heart be bent

Rather to this queen's love or that queen's fear

Than to the sole weal of his natura, land,

That hath more need he should take thought for her
Than one of these or the other. If the

lords

Be purposed, as I guess, to bid the

queen,
Ere this month end, make choice of

Ere this month end, make choice of death or life,—

To live uncrowned, and call her young

son king, Or die by doom attainted,—none but

he

By her submission or her death must

Regent of Scotland; and each hour that flits

With louder tongue requires him, and rebukes

His tardiness of spirit or foot to fiee By swift and private passage forth of France

To where our hearts wait that have need of him.

## Scene II. - Lochleven Castle.

The QUEEN and MARY BEATON. Queen. I would I knew, before this

day be dead,

If I must live or die. Why art thou

pale?
It seems thou art not sad, though I sit here,

And thou divide my prison; for I

Thine eye more kindled, and thy lip more calm,

And hear thy voice more steadfast, than it was

When we were free of body: then the soul

Seemed to sit heavy in thee, and thy

Was as a water's wearied with the wind,

Dim eye and fitful lip, whereon thy speech

Would break and die untimely. Do

And that wan wrinkling water at their foot,

For my sake please thee? Thou shouldst love me well,

Or hate, I know not whether, if to share

The cup wherein I drink delight the lip That pledges in it mine.

Mary Beaton. If I be pale,

For fear it is not, nor for discontent, Here to sit bounded: I could well be pleased

To shoot my thoughts no farther than this wall

That is my body's limit, and to lead My whole life's length as quiet as we sit

Till death fulfilled all quiet, did I

There were no wars without, nor days for you

Of change and many a turbulent chance to be

Whence I must not live absent. *Queen*. Hast thou part,

Think'st thou, as in time past, predes-

In all my days and chances?

Mary Beaton. Yea, I know it. Queen. If thou have grace to proph-

esy, perchance

Canst thou tell too how I shall fare forth hence,—

If quick or dead? I had rather so much know

Than if thou love or hate me. Mary Beaton. Truly, then,

My mind forecasts with no great questioning

You shall pass forth alive.

Queen. What, to my death?

Mary Beaton. To life, and death that comes of life at last:

I know not when it shall. Oueen. I would be sure

If our good guardian know no more than thou:

I think she should; yet if she knew I

I should not long desire to know as much,

But the utmost thing that were of her foreknown

Should in mine eye stand open. Mary Beaton. She is kind.

Queen. I would she were a man that had such heart:

So might it do me service.

Mary Beaton. So it may.

Queen. How? in her son? Av. haply, could I bring

Mine own heart down to feed their hearts with hope,

They might grow great enough to do me good.

I tell thee yet, I thought indeed to die When I came hither. 'Tis but five

weeks gone, —
Five, and two days: I keep the count

of days Here; I can mind the smell of the

moist air As we took land, and when we got to

horse
I thought I never haply might ride

more,
Nor hear a hoof's beat on the glad

green ground, Nor feel the free steed stretch him to

the way, Nor his flank bound to bear me: then

meseemed

Men could not make me live in prison

long;
It were unlike my being, out of my doom;

Free should I live, or die. Then came these walls,

And this blind water shuddering at the sun.

That rose ere we had ten miles ridden; and here

The black boat rocked that took my feet off shore,

And set them in this prison; and as I came

The honey-heavy heather touched my sense

Well-nigh to weeping: I did think to die,

And smell naught sweeter than the naked grave.

Yet sit we not among the worms and roots.

But can see this much, — from the round tower here.

The square walls of the main tower opposite,

And the bare court between; a gracious sight.

Yet did they not so well to let me

live,

If they love life too; I will find those friends

That found these walls and fears to

fence me with A narrower lodging than this seven

feet's space
That yet I move in where nor lip nor

That yet I move in, where nor lip nor limb

Shall breathe or move forever.

Mary Beaton. Do you think
You shall not long live bound?

Queen. Impossible.

I would have violent death, or life at large;

And either speedy. Were it in their mind

To slay me here and swiftly, as I thought,

Thou wouldst not here sit by their leave with me:

They get not so much grace who are now to die,

And could not need it; yet I have heard it said

The headsman grants what sort of grace he may—
A grievous grace—to one about to

bleed

Chat asks some been before his peck

That asks some boon before his neck lie down;

Thy face was haply such a boon to me, Being cradle-fellows and fast-hearted friends,

To see before I died, and this the gift Given of my headsmen's grace: what think'st thou?

Mary Beaton. Nay,

That I know naught of headsmen.

Oueen. Thou hast seen —

It is a sharp, strange thing to see men die.

I have prayed these men for life, thou knowest, — have sent

Prayers in my son's and my dead father's name,

Their kings that were and shall be, and men say

One was well loved of the people, and their love

Is good to have, a goodly stay - and yet

I do not greatly think I fear to die. I would not put off life yet; if I live,

For one thing most shall these men pay me dear,—

That I was ever touched with fear of death.

Thou hast heard how seeing a child on the island once,

Strayed over from the shore, I cried to him

Through the pierced wall, between five feet of stone,

To bid my friends pray God but for my soul,

My body was worth little; and they thought

I was cast down with bitter dread of heart:

Please God, for that will I get good revenge.

I dream no more each night now on my lord,

And yet God knows how utterly I know

I would be hewn in pieces—yea, I think— Or turned with fire to ashes for his

Or turned with fire to ashes for his sake:
Surely I would.

Enter LADY LOCHLEVEN.

Lady Lochleven. Good morrow to your grace.

Queen. Good madam, if the day be good or no

Our grace can tell not; while our grace had yet

The grace to walk an hour in the sun's eye
With your fair daughters and our bed-

fellows

About your battlements that hold us

About your battlements that hold us fast,

Or breathe outside the gateway where our foot

Might feel the terrace under, we might

The morn was good or ill: being here shut up,

We make no guesses of the sun, but think

To find no more good morrows.

Lady Lochleven. Let your grace

Chide not in thought with me; for this restraint,

That since your late scarce intercepted flight

Has been imposed upon me, from my heart

I think you think that I desired it not. Queen. Ay, we were fools, we Maries twain, and thought

To be into the summer back again, And see the broom blow in the golden

world, —
The gentle broom on hill. For all

The gentle broom on hill. For all men's talk

And all things come and gone yet, yet I find

I am not tired of that I see not here,—
The sun, and the large air, and the sweet earth,

And the hours that hum like fire-flies on the hills

As they burn out and die, and the bowed heaven, And the small clouds that swim and

And the small clouds that swim and swoon i' the sun,
And the small flowers. Now should I

keep these things

But as sweet matter for my thoughts in French.

To set them in a sonnet; here at home I read too plain in our own tongue my doom,

To see them not, and love them. Pardon me:

I would have none weep for me but my foes,

And then not tears. Be not more discontent

Than I to think that you could deem of me

As of one thankless; who were thankless found, Not knowing that by no will or work of

yours
I sit suppressed thus from the sun: 'tis

mine,
My fault that smites me; and my
masters' will,

Not mine or yours, it is, that for my fault Devised this penance; which on me wrought out

May fall again on them.

Lady Lochleven. Madam, alas!

I came on no such errand to your grace

As lacked more words to make it sad than those

It was to speak; and these have I put back

Too long and idly. Here are now at gate

Three messengers sent from the parlia-

ment

To speak with you.

Queen. With us to speak? you know, Nor chamberlain nor herald have we here

To marshal men before us. Let them come,

Whom all our kingdom left could keep not out

From this high presence-chamber. Stay: I would not

Be stricken unaware, nor find in you That which I thought not; it were out of kind,

Unwomanlike, to give me to their hands

Who came to slay me, knowing not why they came;

Is it for that?

Lady Lochleven. God's grace forbid it! nay-

Queen. I ask if they bring warrant for my death?

I have seen such things and heard, since leaves bloomed last, That this were no such marvellous

thing to hear.
But if this be, before I speak with them,

I will know first.

Lady Lochleven. Let not your high-

ness dread —
Queen. I do not bid you put me out

of dread.

Have you not heard, and hear? The queen desires

To know of her born subject till she die,

And keeper of her prison, if these men Be come to slay her.

Lady Lochleven. They come to bid your grace —

Queen. Bid my grace do their bidding? that is like: That I should do it were unlike. I must live,

I see, this some while yet. What men are these?

Lady Lochleven. The first, Sir Robert Melville; then the lords

Ruthven and Lindsay.

Queen. Bid my first friend in,

While one friend may be bidden; he, I think,

Can come but friendlike.

[Exit LADY LOCHLEVEN. What should these desire?

One head of theirs I swore last month to have,

That then beheld me, some day, if that hand

hand Whereon I swore should take not first

my life. And one, the son of him that being nigh

Rose from his grave's edge to pluck down alive

A murdered man before him, — what

should he Bring less than murder, being his

father's son,
In such a hand as his that stabbed my
friend?

Mary Beaton. Perchance they come to take your crown, not life.

Queen. What, my name too? but till I vield it them,

They have but half the royal thing they hold,

The state they rayish; and they shall

The state they ravish; and they shall not have

My name but with my life; while that sits fast,

As in my will it sits, I am queen, and they My servants yet that fear to take my

life;
For so thou seest they fear; and I did

ill,

That in first sight of present-seeming death

Made offer to resign into their hands
What here is mine of empire: I shall
live,

And being no queen I live not.

Enter SIR ROBERT MELVILLE.

Welcome si

Welcome, sir;

I have found, since ever times grew strange with me,

Good friends of your good brother and yourself,

And think to find. What errand have

And think to find. What errand have you hero?

Sir Ř. Melville. Let not your majesty cast off the thought

Which calls me friend, though I be first to bear

An evil errand. 'Tis the council's mind That you shall live, and in their hand the proofs

Shall die that plead against you —

Queen. Is this ill?

I know not well what proof that man could show

Would prove men honest that make war on faith,

Show treason trusty, bleach rebellion white,

Bid liars look loyal; and much less I know

What proof might speak against me from their lips

Whose breath may kill and quicken evidence,

Or what good change of mind rebuke the lie

That lived upon them; but that I must live,

And of their proofs unspotted, sounds not worse Than if a friend had come to bear me

word
That I must die belied.

Sir R. Melville. Upon these terms

Are they content for you to live in ward:—

That you yield up as with free hand the crown
And right of kingdom to your son, who

straight
At Stirling shall receive it from their

At Stirling shall receive it from their hands;

Else shall your grace be put to trial, and bear

The doom ensuing, with what of mortal weight

May hang upon that sentence.

Queen. Sir, methought

This word of doom for shame's sake now was dead Even in their mouths that first it soiled, and made

Even shamelessness astonished; not again

We thought to hear of judgment, we that are,

While yet we are any thing, and yet must be,

The voice which deals, and not the ear which takes,

Judgment. God gave man might to murder me,

Who made me woman, weaker than a

But God gave no man right, I think, to judge,

Who made me royal. Come then, I will die:

I did not think to live. Must I die here?

Sir R. Melville. Madam, my errand— Queen. Ay, sir, is received

Here in my heart: I thank you; but you know

I had no hope before; yet sounds it strange

That should not sound, to die at such men's hands,

A queen, and at my years. Forgive me, sir:

Me it not comforts to discomfort you,
Who are yet my friend—as much as
man on earth—

If any, you—that come to bid me die.

Sir R. Melville. Be not cast down so deep: I have an errand

From the English queen, your friend, and here ensheathed

By my sword's secret side, for your fair hand

A letter writ from her ambassador Praying you subscribe what thing my comrades will,

Since naught whereto your writing was compelled

Can hang hereafter on you as a chain When but for this bond written you stand free.

Queen. Ay, I know that: how speaks Elizabeth?

Sir R. Melville. She bids you at all times account of her

As a sure friend and helpful; has, I know,

Indeed no mind to fail you. Queen. This your comfort

Is no small comfort to me; I had rather

Be bounden to her than any prince alive.

Is it her counsel, then, that I subscribe My traitors' writing? I will do it. But, sir,

Of those that sit in state in Edinburgh Which was it chose you for my comforter?

I know my lord of Morton would send none;

It was the secretary?

Sir R. Melville. Madam, the same. Queen. Did I not well then, think you, when I cast

This body of mine between him and the swords

That would have hewn his body? I did think

He was my friend. Bid now mine enc-

And I will sign what sort of shame they will,

And rid them hence.

Enter LINDSAY and the younger RUTH-VEN.

'Tis five weeks gone, my lord,
[To LINDSAY.
Since last we looked on you; for you,

fair sir, [To RUTHVEN.

A year I think and four good months are sped

Since, at that father's back whose name you bear,

I saw your face dashed red with blood My lords,

Ye come to treat with us ambassadors

Sent from our subjects; and we cannot choose,

Being held of them in bonds from whom ye come,

But give you leave to speak.

Lindsay. Thus, briefly, madam:—
If you will live to die no death by

doom,
This threefold bond of contract that
we bring

Requires your hand; wherein of your free wil!

First must you yield the crown of Scotland up

To your child's hand; then by this second deed

The place and name of regent through this realm

To the earl of Murray shall you here assign,

Or, if he list not take this coil in hand, Then to the council; last, this deed empowers

The lords of Mar and Morton with myself

self
To set the crown upon the young king's

head. These shall you sign.

Queen. These I shall sign, or die.

But hear you, sirs: when hither you brought these,

Burned not your hearts within you by the way

Thinking how she that should subscribe was born

King James's daughter? that this shameful hand,

Fit to sustain nor sword nor staff o' the realm,

Hath the blood in it of those years of kings

That tamed the neck and drove with spurs the sides

Of this beast people that now casts off me?

Ay, this that is to sign, no hand but this

Throbs with their sole inheritance of life
Who held with bit and bridle this

bound land,
And made it pace beneath them.

What are ye
That I should tell you so, whose fathers

fought
Beneath my fathers? Where my grand-

sire fell,
And all this land about him, were there

That bore on Flodden, sirs, such names as yours,

And shamed them not? Heard no men past of lords,

That for the king's crown gave their crown of life

For death to harry? Did these grieve or grudge

To be built up into that bloody wall

That could not fence the king? Were no dead found
Of that huge cirque wherein my grand-

sire lay,

But of poor men and commons? Yea, my lords, I think the sires that bred you had not

heart
As men have writ of them, but sent to

fight

For them their vassals visored with

their crests,
And these did well, and died, and left

your sires
That hid their heads forever and lived

long,
The name and false name of their deeds

and death. How should their sons else, how should

ye, being born,
If born ye be, not bastards, of those
lords

Who gat this lying glory to be called Loyal, and in the reek of a false field To fall so for my fathers, — how, I say,

Dare sons of such come hither, how stand here,

From off the daughter's head of all those kings

To pluck the crown that on my fathers' heads

Ye say they died to save? I will not sign:

No, let some Flodden sword dip in my blood;

Here I sit fast, and die. — Good friend that was,

[76 Sir R. Melville.
Tell my great sister that you saw my hand

Strive, and leave off to sign: I had no skill

To shape false letters.

Ruthven. Madam, no man here But knows by heart the height of your

stout words
And strength of speech or sweet rss
all this breath

Can blow not back the storm yourself raised up,

Whose tempest shakes the kingdom from your hand,

And not men's hate. You have been loved of men;

All faith of heart, all honor possible, While man might give, men gave you. Now those deeds

Which none against your will enforced you do

Have set that spirit against you in men's minds,

That till you die (as then your memory may),

Nor your fair beauty nor your fiery heart

Can lay with spells asleep.

Sir R. Melville (aside). I pray you, madam,

Think on mine errand.

Queen. Wherefore should I sign?

If I be queen that so unqueen myself,
What shall it profit me to give my foes
This one thing mine that hallows me,
this name,

This royal shadow? If I be no queen, Let me bleed here; as being uncrowned I know

hat I chall di

That I shall die of all your promises.

Lindsay. We came not, madam, to put force on you,

And save your life by violence; but take note,

[Laying his hand on her arm.
As in this hand your own is fast, and hath

No power till mine give back its power again

To strive or sign, so fast are you in ward,

For life or death, of them that bid you live

And be no queen, or die. Queen. I thank you, sir,

That of your love and courtesy have set

This knightly sign upon my woman's flesh

For proof if I be queen or no, that

Such writing on my body of men's hands

To seal mine abdication. Sirs, read here:

What need I sign again? Here may men see

If she be queen of Scotland on whose arm

Are writ such scriptures as I wist not yet

Men's eyes might read on any woman born. Yet will I write, being free, to assure

myself
This is my hand indeed that wears the

sign
Which proves it vassal to the stronger

Which proves it vassal to the stronger.
Sirs,

Take back your papers; and albeit, my lord,

The conquest you have made of me, henceforth

Lift up your heart with pride. I pray

Lift up your heart with pride, I pray you yet, Boast not yourself on women overmuch,

Lest being their conqueror called, and praised for that,

Men call you too their tyrant. Once and twice

Have we grasped hands: the third time they shall cross Must leave one cold forever. Nay, I

pray, Who may command not surely, yet I

Speak not, but go: ye have that ye came for; go,

And make your vaunt to have found so meek a thing

As would yield all, and thank you.
[Exeunt Lindsay, Ruthven, and Sir R. Melville.

Hast thou read with baths of chil-

Of sick men healed with baths of children's blood?

Lampst he healed of this my plague of

I must be healed of this my plague of shame,

This sickness of disgrace they leave with me,

Bathing in theirs my body.

Mary Beaton. In such streams You have washed your hands already.

Queen. What, in war?

Ay, there I have seen blood shed for we, and yet

Wept not nor trembled; if my heart shrink now,

It is for angry pity of myself That I should look on shame.

Mary Beaton. What shame, my queen?

Queen. Thy queen? why, this, that I, queen once of Scots,

Am no more now than thine. Call back the lords:

I will unsign their writing, and here die; It were the easier end.

Mary Beaton. It is your will—

Forgive me, madam — on this cause again

To grapple with Lord Lindsay?

Queen. True, not yet;

Thou thought'st to make me mad, remembering that;

But it hath made me whole. My wits are sound.

Remembering I must live. When I have slept,

Say I would gladly see the kindlier

Again of our dear hostess with her son To put those angry eyes out of my sight

That lightened late upon me; say, being sad.

And (if thou wilt) being frighted, I must find

The comfortable charities of friends More precious to me. 'Tis but truth,

I am fain, Being tired, to sleep an hour: mine

eyes are hot; Where tears will come not, fire there breeds instead,

Thou knowest, to burn them through.

Let me lie down; I will expect their comforts in an hour.

Scene III. — Holyrood.

Exeunt.

MAITLAND and SIR NICHOLAS THROGMORTON.

Throgmorton. Why would your council give no ear to me

Ere they rode hence so hot to crown their prince?

Why hear not first one word?

Maitland. One threat the more From your queen's lips bequeathed by

or one more promise? If we run her course.

This queen will leave us in the briers, we know,

There to lie fast or labor till the thorns Have rent our flesh and raiment. Throgmorton. Sir, take thought

If help were sent not at the siege of Leith,

When France had grasped you by the throat, and sea

To land gave battle, from that sovereign's hand

Whom now ye trust not.

Maitland. Ay, for her own ends

Maitland. Ay, for her own ends
She cast the French out, and flung back
their power

Which here was deadly to her, and of that deed

Had recompense with surety: but what aid

Must we now look for of her, on whose

will
Hang all our enemies' hopes? I would

I had been Banished seven years my country, and

your queen
On that condition had but as a friend
Dealt freely with us. Let her now
proclaim,

Her own seed failing, this our prince her heir,

And England shall no less have care of him Than we his lineal servants; else, if

hence
We yield him to your keeping, men

will say
We have given our natural master to

be kept As among wolves a sheep, and made

As among wolves a sheep, and made our hope

The fosterling of danger: and small trust

Should we put in her that has newly dealt

By secret message to subvert our state, We know, with those indeed of our queen's kin

From whose report we know it.

Thregmorton. What have they said?

Maitland. That you brought proffers
of her aid and love

To incite their arms, to quicken the

slow snake
Whose sting lies cold yet in their policy,
But watched and warmed of her with
hand and eve

The perfect poison should put forth,

At once the hot and cloven tongue of

Even in our face and bosom; but for fear,

fear, It may be, or being yet at heart's root

Scots, —
For this or that cause, through false heart or true,

So is it, that in doubt of your good

Toward them or Scotland, in whose breast you sought

To make the mutual swords of her own

Clash as they crossed once more, drinking her blood,

They sent us word of all your embassy.

The egmorton. But you, whate'er these thought or feigned to think,

Think no such foolish evil as fools may,—

Deem not of England as the Scot who deems

She hath no will, no line of life, no hope,
No thought but Scotland's ruin, and

our queen

No sense of aught here done, —her sister's doom,

The people's rage, the council's purpose, — naught But where to find in these a guileful

mean
To strike at Scotland? why, these fears

To strike at Scotland? why, these fears are old,

White-bearded dreams, suspicions long grown gray,

Dangers and doubts toothless and eyeless now

That fright nor babe nor dotard; and your thought

Finds room for such? What profit should she have

To turn your swords against each other's throats,

And pick some privy chance of vantage

That fell between your factions at her feet?

Such chance indeed of vantage might there fall

For your own queen, who nowise has been slow

To nurse the chance, and wait on it and serve,

From strifes rekindled and requickening claims

Set each at each in England, whence

Or force might filch or seize for Scotland's sake

Some no less jewel than her eye ere now

Was fixed so fast on, even the crown that hangs

In doubt yet of unsure inheritance,

As hangs not yours for us to pluck at, who,

Reign whoso may when this queen's life is quenched,

In Scotland shall reign never.

Maitland. That I know.

And this no less: that he who reigns shall reign

Never by right of England's leave or love,

Her ward or servant; as, this queen removed, Haply ye hope her lineal heir might

be, And in that hope work with these

Hamiltons
To strike at us in Mary's name, and

pluck

Death from our hands upon her; you, your queen,

And they her kinsfelk all we seek her

And they her kinsfolk, all ye seek her death;

No word but of her freedom in your mouths,

No end than this less looked for in your hearts.

Speak to the council as but now to me, Defy them in her cause, not all the world

For three days' space shall save her

Throgmorton. Nay, not we

Desire the queen's death at your hand provoked,

But here from Tullibardine's mouth I

knov

Her kin at secret heart desire no less; And will ye but allow their house its

right
By heritage to reign, no need, they say,
To take more care for her, who privily
May be put out of life, and no man

more In that dead name be troubled; and

again,

If they with no such promise being assured

Shall not join hands with you, and

England then
Shall bring the queen back whom ye

spared to slay, Ye are lost, and they not winners.

Therefore is it
That of Lord Mar and of yourself I

Help for the queen's deliverance, who

being dead Can profit no man but your foes and

That love not England more than they

love you, Nor you than they love England: shall

not both
With their own cause take part?

Maitland. It is too late;

What part should we take with you, to what end,

Since all the council knows your traffic now

With their chief foes, and how being there betrayed

You can but bring us such a friendship back

As they would none of?

Throgmorton. Sir, if yet you fear,

If you suspect yet that our queen desires

To speed the death of yours or make it sure

By pleading for her, or by threat of war Denounced for her sake, let this letter be

The seal and warrant of our single heart,

Wherein she threatens war, — but smile not yet, — If in his mother's name for him dis-

crowned Ye crown the child that has but wailed

one year.

This should the lords have seen; but even for doubt

Lest it should set their spirits on such fire

As but her blood shed presently could

slake, And this be deemed its aim indeed at

heart And privy purpose of her hand who

writ,
Your eye alone must read that reads it

now And the lord Murray's; for they know

that send, And with it send me this for secret

charge,
They know the truth and heat of fiery

That urges our queen's heart upon this war,

And for no end but for her sake who

sits
Held fast in bonds of her own subjects

born,
And with her all the majesty on earth

That walks with monarchs, and no king alive
But wears some shameful parcel of her

chain.

Maitland. Though this be truth, yet

they that hold it false
Will join in wrath with them that hold

it true, Even for the threat's sake and for

To write red answer in the slain.

queen's blood Back to the queen that threatens. Nay,

herself
Who sits in bonds yet of us will not

yield
To come forth singly safe, nor give

consent That Bothwell should fare worse than

she, or have

More harm or danger; and being thus

incensed,

A three-edged weapon in the council's The worth and unworth weighed of

Is drawn to smite at need, a treble charge

Whereon to impeach her: on that statute first

Made of this land's religion seven years since,

Which though she signed not, yet its breach in her

Shall stand for guilt before them; and thereto

Shall she be challenged of incontinence With more than Bothwell, who by noteless nights

Have made her bed adulterous, and of

The proof that seals her shame in him, they say,

Lies in their hand; last, of her murdered lord

Their warrant cries against her; and from these

No man may think to quit her nor

secure, Save he that here comes timeliest for such toil

As none beside may take upon his hand.

Enter MURRAY.

Welcome, my lord, and to a land that

As never yet it lacked or looked for

What comfort bring you for her wounds from France Besides that present help of hand and

head We heard returned an hour since?

Murray. Sir, thus much: All of our faith in France will in our

Live or die fighting; gold, and men in arms.

Will flow thence on us in full stream and free

If Scotland set but open hand or breast To greet them coming; they will buy our love

At what best price they may.

Throgmorton. But you, my lord, that know

either friend,

French faith or English, will not surely With heavy hate of England the light

love That France and fraud would sell you;

nor for this

Cast off the fortune and the peace unborn

That may bind fast in one strong ring of sea Two jewels become one jewel, one such

As from the stout fort of a single heart Fixed like a sea-rock might look forth and laugh

Upon the under wars of all the world, And see not higher the heads of kingdoms risen

Than of small waves in summer? Will you pluck

This hope out of the hopeful hand of time

Ere he can gather, — this good fruit that grows

On the green present branch of time's gray tree

To feed the future where the hungry

Could get but blood for bread, and with bare steel

Died starved and smitten?

Murray. Sir, when I came in

By secret flight from France, out of the guard

Wherein I lived inwalled with watch of

That the court set about me to with-

My foot from England; when an English boat

Had borne me oversea by secret night From privy port to port, - at the long

I saw your queen's face darken on mine

As on a servant favor-fallen, that came To take rebuke, and speak not; in her speech

I found no note of favor, no good word, That have loved England ever, and Nor honor such as late in France I found.

And finding fled from: sharply with strange eyes

She glanced against me; taxed me with the bonds

Wherein men held my sister; half a threat

Was all her promise; I returned but this,—

I would be still a Scotsman, and this land

I had more mind to serve, and do her good,

Than either of these queens; so parted thence

Unfriendlike, yet with no breach openly Proclaimed of friendship; and being here, my mind

Is yet to serve no mistress but alone This earth my bones were bred of, this

kind land
Which moulded me and fostered; her
strong milk

Put manhood in my blood, and from my heart

If she that nurtured need it now to

I think not much to shed it. If those lords

In whom her power now stands shall with one mouth

Bid me put on this weight of regency, For no man's fear shall I deny them: she,

Your queen, that threatens me with ignominy

If I obey their choice and call, must know

That to God only and my heart, those twain

That are one eye to know me and to judge,

Will I refer it; and of them being known

That with pure purpose and no soiled intent

I take this charge up, I will bear it

To the right end. Yet, ere my mind be fixed,

I will behold her that was queen, and see

How sits the spirit within her; but howe'er,

Till Bothwell in our hands lie trapped and dead

She must not pass forth free; and we will hold

No traffic for the bear's skip merchant

No traffic for the bear's skin merchant like

Before the bear be caught; but if your queen

Proclaim against us therefore war, be sure

We will not lose our lives, yield up our lands,

And bear repute of rebels through the

world, Who might, how loath soe'er, in all

men's eyes
Make our cause clear as righteousness:

the proofs

Which in our hands lie darkling yet, but bear The perfect witness of those ill deeds

That bring her thus in danger of our doom

And righteous peril of all-judging law, Must to the world's eye nakedly set forth What cause is hers, and ours; when if I stand

In the king's likeness of the state elect, To him in me shall all knees bend, and hearts

Kneel subjected; for them that hold apart,

No head shall stand of any Hamilton That shall not bow before my sword or me.

Scene IV. — Lochleven Castle.

The QUEEN and GEORGE DOUGLAS.

Queen. Will he be here to-day? Alasmy friend!

I made my hope of this till he should come,

And now he comes I would not loop.

I know not what put hope into my feat That this your mother's and my father's son

Should do me good for evil.

George Douglas. Madam, I think

The mind can be but good that mar shals him

To your fair presence; nay, though even his soul

Were damned so deep as to desire your death,

He durst not come to show us his purpose here

Who were not chosen for murderers at his hire,

But guards and servants that would shed their lives

Ere yours should look on danger.

Oueen. That we know,

And have no better wage than love to

Which more to give we grudge not, being so poor,

Than from your queen's hands you disdain to take;

But what knows he? For aught our brother knows,

Your mother and yourself are envious guards

That hate me for my faith as for my fault,

And hold your hands but till he bids you slay,

Or yield me to my slayers. Ah! my last knight,

You shall do well to leave me at my need:

He will command you: when this

brother knows
I am not hated, think you then my

friend
Shall not be chidden from me?

George Douglas. When my life Is bidden from my body: not till then Shall I be found obedient.

Enter LADY LOCHLEVEN.

Oueen. Be but wise.

And wisdom shall not let you disobey.

Our noble hostess, you have borne a son,

I dare not say more noble, but I dare More simple, than his elders,—one whose heart

Stands fast when fortune stands not, and requires,

As other men do power and glory and gold,

No guerdon but the memory writ of

To have been most true when fortune was most false,

And most to have loved whom she most hated: this

Shall not of them be written. Come you not

To bring one to me that shall never sin As he by faith and folly? I would say Of my great brother and your kingly

Nothing but good; yet can nor you nor I

Say that he loves me and my fallen estate

More than the power he comes to take from me,

Or rather from their hands that ere he came

Had rent it out of mine. Nay, look not sad:

You should be merrier than my mother might,

Were she now living.

Lady Lochleven. God shall witness me

What joy I have of such a guest, or pride

To be so stricken, madam, of your tongue

Chastising me for triumph: if my heart Exalt itself for this day's sake, God knows,

Who hears you mock me.

Queen. Nay, I said no scorn;

I had rather need to pray you in his name
Scorn not at me. Let him come in. I

know What ceremony my masters should put

on
Were but to mock their servant.

Enter MURRAY, ATHOL, and MORTON

Sirs, you twain

That brought me two months since between you safe Out of the town by night that sought

my blood

Myself bid welcome; but she is not I That in this presence should make welcome here

My father's son; nor shall my speech usurp

For modesty that office: yet indeed

I am glad, my lord, to see your face, that must

Bring comfort, or an end of all this life That yet needs comfort.

Murray. What I may, I will:

Yet haply shall you find not in my words

Or death or comfort; as you give them heed,

Shall they prove comfortable or deadly.

Shall they prove comfortable or deadly.

— Sirs,

I have that to speak and hear that but requires

The Lady Mary's ear and mine: I pray you,

Take not offence that I crave leave to

We must for some space lack your company.

Morton. My lord, the land that puts

her trust in you
Bids us obey, well knowing that love
nor fear

Shall bend you from her service.

Lady Lochleven. Sir -Murray. Your will?

Lady Lochleven. I am ne parcel of the sovereign state

That gives you of its greatness, nor have right

To speak commandingly; yet ere I go I would desire you by what name I may,

Look on this lady with such equal eyes As nor the wrath and hate of violent men,

Nor sense of evil done to this land's peace

By her mischance and evil counsellors, Nor (what I would not fear to find in you)

Desire of rule with pride of station,

Divert to do her wrong, or glance aside, From the plain roadway of that righteousness

Whose name is also mercy. This at least

Surely by me may be of you required, That in this house no wrong by word or act.

By deed or threat, may touch her. Murray. Be assured No wrong shall ever touch her by my hand,

And be content to know it. Queen. Madam, these lords

Know that I thought ere this to find of you

A mediatress between me and your son:

I have my hope, and with a humble heart

I take your intercession thankfully.

[Exeunt all but the QUEEN and MUR-RAY.

Murray. I would I had another cause to speak,
Or you to listen, than this bitter theme

That brings us back together, though for that

I had died a foreign man. Queen. I thought not, sir,

When we last parted ere the break companies,

To meet you thus in summer; but these months

Have wrought things stranger on me. Murray. Say, yourself

Have made of them more strange and perilous use

Than is the fruit they bear. I am not come
To flatter with you; that I seek your

death
I think you fear not, yet should surely

know
The man that seeks were now more like

to speed
Than he that would preserve it.
Heaven and earth

As with the tongue of one same law demand

Justice against you; nor can pity
breathe

But low and fearful, till the right be weighed

That must in pity's spite and fear's be

Or this land never thrive. For that right's sake,

And not for hatred or rebellious heart,
Do men require that judgment pass on
you.

And bring forth execution: the broad world

Expects amazedly when we that rule Shall purge this land of blood, which now looks red

In the world's eye, and blushing not for shame

Blushes with bloodshed; in men's general mouths

The name of Scot is as a man's attaint Of murderous treason, or as his more

That for base heart and fear, or hire of gold,

With folded hands watches the hands that slay

Grow great in murder; and God's heavy doom

Shall be removed not from us, nor his

wrath, Well may we fear, shall lighten, till the

deed
That reeks as recent yet toward the fair heavens

Be thoroughly cleansed with judgment.

Oueen. Must I too

Bleed to make Scotland clean of baser blood

Than this she seeks of mine? Murray. If you shall die,

Bethink you for what cause, and that sole thought

Shall seal your lips up from all pride of plea

That would put in between your deed and doom

The name of queen to cover you. No age

That lived on earth red-handed without law

Ever let pass in peace and unchastised Such acts as this that yet in all men's ears

Rings as a cry unanswered. When your lord

Lay newly murdered, and all tongues of friends

Were loud in prayer to you to save your name

From stain of accusation, and yield up That head to judgment which the whole world held

Blood-guilty, first with subtle stretch of time

Did you put back the trial, then devise

To make it fruitless save of mockery; next,

I cannot say for shame what shame foregone

Moved you to put upon this loathing land

That great dishonor to behold and bear The man your lover for its lord, and you,

Queen of all Scots and thrall of one most base,

While yet the ring was from his finger warm

That sealed it first, and on his wedded

hand
The young blood of your husband, ere

the print

Had cooled of marriage or of murder, —

you
In the bet circle of his amount arms

In the hot circle of his amorous arms A new-espoused adulteress. Will you say

You were enforced or by false counsels bent

To take him to your bosom? In what

Was not the foregone commerce of your loves

As bare as shame? what ear had heard not blown

His name that was your sword and paramour,

Whose hand in yours was now as steel to slay,

Now as a jewel for love to wear, a pledge

Hot from your lips and from your husband's heart?

Who knew not what should make this man so proud

That none durst speak against him of your friends

But must abide for answer unaware

The peril of the swords that followed him?

Went he not with you where you went, and bade

Men come and go, do this or do not, stand

Or pass as pleased him, ere that day had risen

Which gave the mockery of a ravished bride

To the false violence of his fraudful rape

That hardly she could feign to fear, or hide

The sweetness of the hour when she might yield

That which was his before, and in men's eves

Make proof of her subjection? Nay, forbear;

Plead not for shame that force was put on you

To bear that burden and embrace that shame

For which your heart was hungry: foe nor friend

nor friend Could choose but see it, and that the

food desired

Must be but mortal to you. Think on
this.—

How you came hither crowned these six years gone,

In this same summer month, and with what friends

Girt round about, and guarded with what hopes,

And to a land how loving; and these years,

These few brief years, have blown from off your boughs

All blossom of that summer, though nor storm Nor fire from heaven hath wrecked nor

wind laid low
That stately tree that shadowed a glad

land,
But now being inly gnawn of worms to

death,
And made a lurking-place for poisonous things

To breed and fester at its rotten root, The axe is come against it. None save

You
Could have done this, to turn all hearts

and hands,

That were for love's sake laid before your feet.

To fire and iron whetted and made hot

To war against you. No man lives that knows

What is your cause, and loathes not; though for craft

Or hope of vantage some that know will seem

To know not, and some eyes be rather blind

Than see what eyeless ignorance in its sleep,

If but it would, must needs take note of: none
Whose mind is maimed not by his own

mere will,
And made perforce of its own deed

And made perforce of its own deed perverse,

Can read this truth awry. What have you done?

Men might weep for you, yea, behold-

ing it,

The eyes of angels melt: no tide of

tears
Could wash from hand or soul the sin-

ful sign
That now stands leprous there; albeit

God knows

Myself for very pity could be glad

By mine own loss to ransom you, and set

Upon your soul again the seal of peace, And in your hand its empire; but your act

Has plucked out of men's hearts that fain would keep

The privilege of mercy. God alone Can lose not that forever, but retains For all sins done that cry for judgment here

The property of pity, which in man
Were mere compliance and confederacy
With the sin pardoned. So shall you
do best,

Being thus advised, to entertain the hope

Of nothing but God's mercy, and henceforth

Seek that as chiefest refuge; for in

There shall no trust deliver you, nor free

Body nor soul from bonds. Weep not for that;

But let your tears be rather as were

That wept upon the feet of God, and bought

With that poor price her pardon.

Queen. So should I,

If grief more great may buy it than any of theirs

That had sinned more than I; nay, such have been.

And have been pardoned. I have done ill, and given

My name for shame to feed on, put mine honor

Into mine enemies' keeping, made my fame

A prey and pasture for the teeth of scorn.

I dare not say I wist not by what mean I should be freed of one that marred my life,

Who could by no mean else be quit of him

Save this blind way of blood: yet men there were

More wise than I, men much less wronged of him,

That led me to it, and left me; but indeed

I cite not them to extenuate by strange

Mine own rash mind and unadvisedness,

That brought forth fruit of death; yet must you know

What counsels led me by the hand, and whence

and whence My wrath was fostered; and how all

alone, How utterly uncomforted, and girt

With how great peril, when the man was slain,

I stood, and found not you to counsel me,

And no man else that loved; and in such need,

If I did ill to seek to that strong hand Which had for me done evil, — if evil it were

To avenge me of mine enemy, — what did they

That by their hands and voices on his side

Put force on me to wed him? Yet I say not,

I was indeed enforced: I will not mock With one false plea my penitent heart, nor strive

With words to darken counsel, not incense

By foolishness your wisdom, to provoke A judgment heavier than I wait for nay.

You have not said that bitter thing of me

That I may dare unsay; what most I would,

I must deny not: yet I pray you think, Even as might God, being just, what cause I had,

What plea to lighten my sore load of sin, —

Mismated and miscounselled, and had seen

Of my sad life not wholly nineteen years

When I came hither crowned; as yet would God

Your head, my brother, had endured for mine

That heaviness of honor, and this hand

The weight of Scotland, that being laid in mine

Has fallen and left it maimed, and on my brows

A mark as his whose temples for his crime

Were ringed with molten iron! Take them now, Though but for pity of me that pray

you take, And bear them better than I did; for

me,
Though no plea serve me in the sight

of man,
Nor grace excuse my fault, I am yet
content,

If I may live but so much time in

bonds
As may suffice for God to pardon me.

Who shall not long put off to pardon, then

Shut eyes and sleep to death.

Murray. I had thought to-night
To speak no more with you, but let that
hope

Which only in God's name I gave you bear

What fruit it might with prayer and watching: yet

Take comfort, and assure yourself of life,

And, if it may be, honor; one of these I may take on me to redeem, and one So as I may will I preserve from death Dealt of men's tongues that murder it.

But you,

Keep these things in your heart: that if you raise

Within this realm a faction, or devise To break these bonds, I shall not keep an hour

This power I have to save you; nor shall keep

If France or England be by word of yours

Stirred up to strike at our frail peace; nor yet

nor yet

If you shall cleave to him that should
for shame

As from this land be cast out from your heart:

But if toward God your faults be faithfully

In good men's sight acknowledged, and that life

You led with your false lord, and all sins past,

Loathed and lamented, and in days to be

The living purpose in you manifest Of a more modest habit, and a life More nobly fashioned; if the slaughter

On your dead husband seem of you abhorred,

And those ill days misliked wherein your fame

Drank mortal poison from his murderer's hand, —

If this be seen, and that your mind lives clear

From counsel of revenge upon those lords

Who sought your reformation, nor with hope

Nor dangerous forethought of device to be

Renews itself to do them some day wrong, —

Then may you now sit safe, and un-

reproved
Expect an end of bondage; for at large

You cannot think to live yet, who in time

May haply by repentance be restored, And, for your prison somewhile here endured, Find yet your throne again, and sit

renewed

More royal than men wist who saw the

ship
Put in from France that bore you.

Queen. O my friend,

O brother, found now father to me too, Who have raised and rebegotten me from death,

By how much less I thank you for my life,

Think so much more for honor I give thanks

That you raise up the hope in me to have

Which was nigh dead for shame. Oh!

My comfort in mine arms, and with

dumb lips
Kiss you my thanks: I looked for less
than this,

But yet for comfort of you. One thing more,

Having so much, will I require, and cease,—

Even for my son's sake and mine own to lay

The charge upon you of this regency Which none might bear so noble, nor bring back

Her peace again to Scotland, as I know Your hand shall bring; and, had I known betimes,

I had not started from its curb aside, Nor set against its strength, in no good

hour,
The feebleness of mine. But if your

heart
Be large enough to let forgiveness in

Of my wrongs done, and days of wanton will,

Take this charge too, — to keep for me the forts

Of all that was my kingdom: I would have

Nothing of mine lie now not in your hand.

Keep too my jewels; all I had of worth,

What help without you should I have of it.

What profit or what surety? Let your

Cast her not out who prays you of your grace,

Take these in trust and me. Murray. I may not these;

But you, that put yourself into my trust, I will not fail.

Queen. Nay, you shall keep them too. Murray. I would not put my hand forth uncompelled

To take for life and death the burden

That burns as fire, and bows the back that bears

As with an iron load; and certainly He that shall take this kingdom on his hand,

I think, shall live not long: nor pride nor hope,

But very love and strong necessity, Could only bow me down to obey their will

Who should enforce on mine the task to bear

This grievous office, that if Scotland bid I for her sake must bear till I may die. But if I be not bidden, for no love

Or fear, or lust of kingdom, will I seek The labor and the grief of that great charge

That I may live and feel not.

Queen. By my lips,

That have no royal right to speak for Now, think that yet she bids you, seeing

none else To undo mine evil done on her, and

The wounds mine enemies and myself have made

In her sweet peace; she hath no stay but you: Whom other should she seek to? And

for me Again I dare not urge you, but my

is turned into a prayer that pleads with

To lend its weakness comfort of your strength

By taking off its fears; these that break

Can bow not yours: oh! take from me that weight

Which were to you but sport and orna ment, -

The natural honor of a hand so strong And spirit elect of all men's souls alive To do a work imperial.

Murray. If not else

But by me only may this land find peace,

By me, then, shall it. For your private charge,

Impute not to me for default of love That I beseech you lay no more on

Than public need enforces: in my trust Your treasures were no safer than they

stand Now that I keep them not, and no man's tongue

Can tax me with them as detained from

By fraud or usurpation; which mine ear Were loth to know was muttered.

Queen. But you see

Nor they nor I have surety save in you: Let it be seen of them that else may doubt.

How thankfully I trust you; even for

Do thus, to do me good in men's report When they shall see us at one: from mine own hand,

Except you take them, shall they not be rent

By craft or force of hidden or harrying

That could not wrest from yours what mine must vield

For fault of you to help me?

Murray. As you will.

I would not cross you where I might content:

Yet willingly I cannot take on me

More charge than needs of privy trusts to keep That bring men's blame about them

but in this

My will shall be your servant.

Re-enter LADY LOCHLEVEN and GEORGE DOUGLAS.

For this time I take farewell: be patient, and seek peace

Whence God may send it. - To your gentler hand,

While yet the Lady Mary lives in ward, Behooves not me commend her, being but bound

As reverently as may be seem your son In the state's name to charge you that she find

At all men's hands that guard her now

Good usage with safe keeping; which

to assure Shall hardly need this young man's service here.

For whom the state has other use, and

A worthier work than still to keep such

As porters use or pages. Lady Lochleven. He and I

Stand at your bidding; yet were nowise

The state that gave should take this charge away

It laid upon us.

Queen. Sir, the grace you brought And comfort, to me sorrowing and afraid,

Go ever with you; and farewell. Murray. Farewell.

[Exeunt LADY LOCHLEVEN and MUR-

Queen. Will you not go?

George Douglas. Whither you bid, and when, I will go swiftly. Queen. With your lord and mine,

I would have said: yet irks it me to My lord, who had none under heaven,

and was Of these my lords once lady. Said I

You should do well to cast off care of

Whom you must leave indeed now at command

More powerful of more potent lips than mine?

I would not have you set your younger

Against his word imperial: nor, I think, Doth he fear that, who bids us come and go,

And whose great pleasure is that you part hence,

And I sit here. Be patient, and seek peace,

You heard him bid me: patience we must have

If we would rest obedient: and for peace,

So haply shall we find it, having learnt

What rest is in submission.

George Douglas. Bid me stay,

And that my will shall part not hence

What need I swear?

Queen. Alas! your will may stay, Your will may wait on me to do me

good, Your loves and wishes serve me, wher

vourself Shall live far off, Our lord forbids

them not:

It is the service of your present hand, The comfort of your face, help of your heart.

That he forbids me.

George Douglas. And, though God forbade,

Save by my death he should compel me not

To do this bidding: only by your mouth.

Of all that rule in heaven and earth, will I

Be willingly commanded.

Queen. You must go. Nay, I knew that: how should one stay by me?

There was not left me, by God's wrath or man's,

One friend when I came hither, in the world.

And from the waste and wilderness of grief

If one grain ripen, — from the stone and sand

If one seed blossom, - if my misery

One spring on earth to assuage its fiery lip, —

How should I hope that God or man will spare

To trample or to quench it? George Douglas. I am here

While you shall bid me live, and only hence

When you shall bid me but depart and die.

Queen. There was a time when I would dream that men

There were to do my bidding, — such

as loved And were beloved again, and knew not

Nor hope but of love's giving; but meseemed

That in my dream all these were cast

away, And by God's judgment, or through

wrath of men,
Or mine own fault, or change and chance
of time,

I lived too long to look for love in

Many there are that hate me now of men:

Doth one live yet that loves?

George Douglas. If one there were That for your love's sake should abhor his life.

Hating all hope save this, to die for you,—

What should he do to die so? Queen. If I bade

That for my love's sake he should love his life,

And use its strength to cherish me, who knows

If he would heed? or say I gave com-

To do some ill thing or of ill report, — Were it to slay our brother now gone hence, —

Would one do that? I would not have it done,

Though I should bid him. Do not answer me

As though I questioned with you seriously,

Or spake of things that might be thought upon,

Who do but jest with grief as with my friend,

That plays again familiarly with me, And from the wanderings of a joyless wit

Turn to clasp hands with sorrow. You must go.

George Douglas. Ay, when you bid; but were my going from you

Part of your grief, which is more grief to me

Than my soul's going from forth my body were,

I would not set my face from hence alive.

Queen. I hold it not for no part of
my grief
To hid you from me; yet being here

To bid you from me: yet being here bound in

As I with walls and waters, we should find

Less help than yet I hope for of your hand

Being hence enlarged. We will take counsel, sir,

And choose, with no large choice to make of friends,—

To whom we shall appoint you, —by what mean

To deal for our deliverance: as, with one Once of my household, and this lady's

kin, Who here of all my Maries the last

left
Partakes my bonds; the Laird of

Ricarton,
My husband's kinsman; and what readi-

est friends Once more may be raised up, as when I fled

From shame and peril, and a prison-

As hateful as these bonds, to find on earth —

Ah! no such love and faith as yours in man.

## Scene V. - Holyrood.

MURRAY and MORTON.

Murray. I am vexed with divers counsels, and my will

Sees nor its way nor end. This act proclaimed

That seals the charge of murder on the

To justify our dealing had to it hands That here first met: Kirkaldy with Glencairn.

Balfour with Maitland, Huntley with

Argyle,

True man with traitor, - all were as one mind.

One tongue to tax her with complicity, Found art and part with them that slew her lord.

Men praised the council for this judg-

ment given

As from a single and a resolute soul; Scarce one withstood save Herries,

and his voice

Was as a wind that sings in travellers'

Unheeded; then the doom that gives to death

All that in act maintain the former faith, And writes for Catholic traitor, should

have purged

The state of treacherous or of danger-

ous friends Such as made protest then against this

And fled from our part to the Hamil-

tons, -Caithness and Athol, with the bishop

called Of Murray, whom the Assembly met to judge

By one same doom has with Argyle condemned

To stand in sackcloth for adulteries

At Stirling through the time of service

Within the chapel royal. Such men's

It irks not me to lose, who by their loss Were fain to win their enemies for my friends

More fast and faithful; but men's sundering minds

Nor council nor assembly can reknit, Though Knox there sit by Maitland, and Balfour

Touch sides with Craig; and while the state as now

Lives many-minded and distraught of will,

How shall its hope be stable?

Morton. Some there are Have all their will, or more than we that rule

By secular wit and might: the preachers

With heavier hand than ours upon the state,

Who in this late assembly by their doom

Bade your fair sister of Argyle partake The sackcloth penance of her slippery

For scandal to the Kirk done when last

At the font's edge her arms sustained our prince

For baptism of such hands as served the mass:

If it have leave long to sit lawgiver, Their purity will pinch us.

Murray. Have no fear:

It shall not Douglas; and we lack their help

Who sway the commons only with their breath,

Now most of all when our high counsels fail.

And hopes are turned as 'twere to running streams

That flow from ours to feed our enemies' hands

With washings of our wreck, waifs of our strength.

That melts as water from us. Those chief twain

Whose league I sought by marriage, and had hope

To bind them to us as brethren, when Argyle

With me should knit himself anew, to

His brother to the sister of my wife

With happier hope than he espoused mine own,

While Huntley's son should lead my

daughter home,

And with this fourfold knot our loves be tied,

And fortunes with each other's growth ingraffed,—

Both these look back now toward the Hamiltons

To mingle factions with them, being assured

Our hands now lack the secret sword we had

To draw at need against them, since their names

Set at Craigmillar to the bond of blood Are with that bond consumed, and no tongue left

To wag in witness of their part of guilt, Now Bothwell's knaves are hanged that laid the train,

And Hay with them, and one most near his trust, —

His kinsman Hepburn, from whose mouth condemned,

And Ormiston's, we have confession

That narks with blood as parcel of

their deed More than Balfour that in the assem-

bly sit, And must partake his surety. This, my

lord,
Craves of us care and counsel, that our

names
Be writ not fool or coward, who took
in hand

Such trust to work such treason.

Morton. Nay, no Scot

Shall say we fell from faith or treacherously

Let men's hopes fade that trusted us, and sank Through feebleness of ours: yet have

we strength

To lower the height of heart and confidence

That makes their faction swell, who were but late

Too faint of spirit, too fearful and unsure, To be made firm with English subsi-

Three thousand marks, that Scrope by secret hand

Sent from Carlisle to Herries, could not serve

To give or shape or sinew to their plots

Who are now so great their houses' heir must wed

No lowlier than a queen, and Both well's wife,

For this divorced or widowed.

Murray. Ay; we know

The archbishop his good uncle with this youth

Hath in Dumbarton fortified himself; And while they there sit strong and high in hope

Our prisoner and our penitent late, we hear,

Grows blithe of mood and wanton;

from her sight Have I dismissed my mother's youngest

born, Lest in her flatteries his weak faith be

snared And strangled with a smile; and for

her hand
I have found a fitter suitor than

Arbroath When she shall wed again, within

whose veins Some drops of blood run royal as her

own; Methuen, whose grandsire was the

third that set
His ring on that Queen Margaret's
wedded hand

From the seventh Henry sent ambassadress

To our fourth James, to bring for bridal gift

Her father's love and England's to her lord,

And with the kiss of marriage on his lips

To seal that peace which with her husband's life

Found end at Flodden from her brother's hand

That split the heart of Scotland. So the queen,

If she wed Methuen, shall espouse a

Whose father of the same queen's womb was born

That bore her father; and whose blood as hers

Is lineal from the seed of English kings.

Through one same mother's sons, queen once of Scots,

And daughter born and sister, though unqueened,

Of those twain Henries that made peace and war

With Scotland and her lord; and by this match

The Hamiltons being frustrate of their hope

Could yet not tax us with a meaner choice

Than they would make for her, who while she lives

Must stand thenceforth far off from their designs

And disallied from all that in her name Draw now to head against us; and some help

We need the more to cross them now, that France.

To whom I thought to seek as to my friend

And thence find aid in this necessity That else finds none, since England's

jealous craft
Puts in our enemies' hands gold for a

sword

More sharp than steel — France, that
would send at need

The choice of all her sons that hold our

To live and die beside us here in arms, Grows chillier toward us than the changing wind

That brings back winter; for the brood of Guise,

Our prisoner's friends and kinsmen of Lorraine,

Prevail again on Catherine's adverse part,

Whose hate awhile gives way to them, and yields

Our cause into their hands that were more like

To help this daughter of their dangerous house

Take up the crown resigned, and through their strength

Renew this kingdom's ruin with her reign,

Than send us aid and arms to guard its peace

From inroad as from treason: which 1 doubt

We shall hear news of from my brother's tongut,

Enter SIR WILLIAM DOUGLAS. Who comes without a herald.

Sir W. Douglas. Sir, the news Is dashed with good and evil equally,

That here I bring you; for the treasons laid

Have missed their mark, and left unwounded yet

My house's honor, that retains in trust So great a charge. You had word ere this of me,

By what strange fortune was their plot made known,

Who thought to fall upon us unaware, And find a ferry for some seventy swords

To cross the lake in mine own barge surprised,

And smite those thirty guards that hold the walls,

And make a murderous passage for the queen

To come forth free with feet that walked in blood; And how by one, a Frenchman of her

train,
Who, being not in their counsel, heard

some speech
Of such a preparation, and conceived

This was a plot to take her from your hand,

Laid by the fiercer faction of the Kirk That sought to snare and slay her in your despite,

To me was all discovered; and betimes

I gave command no barge thenceforth should pass

Between the main shore and mine island walls,

But a skiff only that with single oars Might be rowed over. Baffled thus,

here friends
Were fain to buy the boatman's faith

with gold, Whom on suspicion I dismissed but

since,

Finding less trust and service in the knave

That had his place, called back, and bade take heed

Of these that would have won to their device

A foundling page within my castle bred, And called by mine own name; who by this plot

Should have seduced for them my sentinels,

And oped the gate by night: but yet I find,

For all toils set and gins to take their faith,

In him and them no treason; yet so

Was treason to us, that not long since the queen

Had well-nigh slipped beyond our guard by day,

In habit of a laundress that was hired So to shift raiment with her; but being

Betimes, as was this woman's use to come,

In the low light by dawn, at such an

As she was wont to sleep the morning out,

The fardel in her hand of clothes brought forth,

And on her face the muffler, - it befell That as she sat before the rowers, and saw

Some half her free brief way of water

By turn of head or lightning of her

For mirth she could not hide, and joyous heart,

Or but by some sweet note of majesty, Some new bright bearing and imperious

change From her false likeness, so she drew

their eyes That one who rowed, saying merrily, Let us see

What manner of dame is this, would fain pluck down

Her muffler, who to guard it suddenly Put up her fair white hands, which seeing they knew,

And marvelled at her purpose; she Save toward a queen, toward this her thereat.

A little wroth but more in laughter bared

Her head, and bade stretch oars and take the land

On their lives' peril; which regarding

They straight put back as men amazed, but swore

To keep fast locked from mine of all men's eyes

The secret knowledge of this frustrate craft,

So set her down on the island side again. With muffled head and hidden hands to wring

And weep apart for passion, where my watch

Looks now more strict upon her; but I think, -

For all her wrath and grief to be by chance

From her near hope cast down and height of mind

Wherein she went forth laughingly to

What good might God bring of her perilous hour, -

She hath lost not yet not changed that heart nor hope,

But looks one day to mock us.

Murray. So I think:

And in that fear would have you keep fast watch By night and day till we take off the

charge Laid on your faith, and or enfranchise

Or change her place of ward; which,

ere the spring That holds in chase this winter's flying

foot Be turned to summer, haply shall be done.

What fashion holds our mother with the

queen? Sir W. Douglas. As she was ever

tender of her state, And mild in her own office, so she keeps

Observance yet and reverence more than meet

guest enforced.

Who smiles her back a prisoner's thanks, and sighs

That should smile in prison; but 'twixt whiles

Some change of mood will turn to scorn or spleen

Her practised patience, and some word take wing

Forth from her heart's root through her lips that hath

The gail of asps within it; yet not this

Turns the heart hard or bitter that awaits

Her gentler change, pitying the wrong it bears,

And her that wrongs it for the sorrow's sake

That chases and rends her.

Murray. Pity may she give,

And be praised for it; but to entertain

Hope or desire that wars against her trust

Should turn that praise to poison. Have you seen

Since George went thence, or noted ere he went,

In her no token of a mingled mind That sways 'twixt faith and such a faithless hope

As feeds a mother's love with deadly dreams

Of prophesying ambition? for in him I spied the sickness of a tainted heart And fever-fired from the most mortal eyes

That ever love drank death of.

Sir W. Douglas. No, my lord.

Murray. I would fain trust her mind were whole in this, And her thoughts firm; yet would not

trust too far, Who know what force of fraud and fire

Who know what force of fraud and fire of will

In that fierce heart and subtle, without fear,

That God hath given so sweet a hidingplace, Make how much more the peril and the

power
Of birth and kinglier beauty, that lay

wait

For her son's sake to tempt her. We will hold

More speech of this: here shall you rest to-night. [Exeunt.

## Scene VI. - Lochleven Castle.

The QUEEN and MARY BEATON.

Queen. Is it not sunset? what should ail the day

To hang so long in heaven? the world was blind

By this time yesternight. The lake gleams yet.

Will the sun never sink, for all the weight

That makes this hour so heavy?

Mary Beaton. While you speak,

The outer gate that stands till nightfall wide

Shuts on the sundown; and they bring the keys

That soon the page shall put into our hand

To let in freedom.

Queen. I could weep and laugh

For fear and hope and angry joy and doubt

That wring my heart. I am sick at once and well.

Shall I win past them in this handmaid's dress

If we be spied? My hood is over broad;

Help me to set it forward: and your own

Sits loose; but pluck it closer on your face

For cloak and cover from the keen moon's eye

That peers against us. Twice, thou knowest, yea thrice,

God has betrayed me to mine enemies' hands

Even when my foot was forth: if it slip

now, He loves nor kings that hold his office

here Nor his own servants, but those faith

less mouths
That mock all sovereignties in earth of heaven.

If here he fail me, and I fall again

To sit in bonds a year — by God's own truth,

I swear I will not keep this wall of flesh

To cage my spirit within these walls of stone,
But break this down to set that free

from these,

That, being delivered of men's wrongs and his,

It may stand up, and gazing in his eyes Accuse him of my traitors.

Mary Beaton. Keep good heart. Your hope before was feverish and too light,

And so it failed you: in this after-plot There is more form and likeness than in those

That left you weeping. Let not passion

Foil your good fortune twice, or heat of mood

From keen occasion take the present

And blunt the point of fortune.

Queen. If I knew

This man were faithful - oh, my heart that was

Is melted from me, and the heart I have Is like wax melting. Were my feet once free,

It should be strong again: here it sinks down

As a dead fire in ashes. Dare we think I shall find faith in him, who have not found

In all the world? no man of mine there is.

None of my land or blood, but hath betrayed,

Betrayed or left me.

Mary Beaton. Nay, too strange it

That you should come to want men's faith, and look

For love of man in vain. These were your jewels,

You cannot live to lack them: nay, but less, —

Your common ornaments to wear and leave,

Your change of raiment to cast off, and bind

A fresher robe about you: while men live.

And you live also, these must give you love,

And you must use it.

Queen. So one told me once, -

That I must use and lose it. If my time

Be come to need man's love, and find it not,

I have known death make a prophet of a man That living could foretell but his own

end,

Not save himself, being foolish; and I too,

I am mad as he was, now to think on him

Or my dead follies. Were these walls away,

I should no more; ay, when this strait is past,

I shall win back my wits and my blithe heart,

And make good cheer again. Enter PAGE.

Page. Here are the keys.

I had wrought instead a ladder for our need,

With two strong oars made fast across, for fear

I had failed at last from under my lord's

To sweep them off the board-head here they ring,

As joy-bells here to give your highness note The skiff lies moored on the island's

The skiff lies moored on the island's lee, and waits

But till the castle boats by secret hands Be stripped of oars and rowlocks, and

pursuit Made helpless, maimed of all its means;

Made helpless, maimed of all its means; the crew

Is ready that shall lend us swifter wing Than one man's strength to fly with; and beyond

Your highness' friends upon the further bank

Wait with my master's horses. Never

A fairer plot or likelier.

Queen. How thy face

Lightens! Poor child, what knowest thou of the chance

That cast thee on my fortunes? it may

To death ere life break bud, and thy poor flower The wind of my life's tempest shall cut

off,
And blow thy green branch bare. Many

And blow thy green branch bare. Many there be

Have died, and many that now live shall die,

Ere my life end, for my life's sake; and none

none There is that knows, of all that love or

hate, What end shall come of this night's work, and what

Of all my life-days. I shall die in bonds.

Perchance, a bitter death; yet worse it were

To outlive dead years in prison, and to

The life I could not lose. This will not be:

No days and nights shall I see wax and wane,

Kindled and quenched in bondage, any more:

For if to-night I stand not free on earth As the sun stands in heaven, whose sovereign eye

Next day shall see me sovereign, I shall live

Not one day more of darkling life, as

Pent in a grate, bound in with blackening bars,

But like a star by God hurled forth of heaven

Fall, and men's eyes be darkened, and the world

Stand heart-struck, and the night and day be changed

That see me falling. If I win not forth, But, flying, be taken of the hands that were

Before laid on me, they shall never

To hold me more in fetters, but take heart

To do what earth saw never yet, and lay

By doom and sentence on their sovereign born

Death; I shall find swift judgment, and short shrift

My justicers shall give me: so at least Shall I be quit of bondage. Come, my friends,

That must divide with me for death or life

This one night's issue; be it or worst or best,

Yet have ye no worse fortune than a queen,

Or she than ye no better. On this hour Hang all those hours that yet we have to live:

Let us go forth to pluck the fruit of this

That leans now toward our hand. My heart is light:

Be yours not heavier; for your eyes and mine

Shall look upon these walls and waves no more. [Exeunt.

Scene VII. — The Shore of Loch Leven.

GEORGE DOUGLAS, BEATON, RICAR-TON, with Attendants.

George Douglas. I hear the beat of the oars: they make no haste. How the stars thicken! if a mist would

take
The heaven but for an hour, and hide

them round —

Ricarton. How should they steer then
straight? We lacked but light.

And these are happy stars that sign this hour

With earnest of good fortune; and

betimes
See by their favor where the prize we seek

Is come to port.

Enter the QUEEN, MARY BEATON,
Page, and a girl attending.

Queen. Even such a night it was I looked again for to deliver me,

Remembering such a night that broke my bonds Two wild years past that brought me through to this;
The wind is loud beneath the mount-

ing moon, And the stars merry. Noble friends,

And the stars merry. Noble friends, to horse:

When I shall feel my steed exult with me,

I will give thanks for each of your good deeds

To each man's several love. I know not yet

That I stand here enfranchised; for pure joy

I have not laid it yet to heart: methinks

This is a lightning in my dreams tonight,

That strikes and is not, and my flattered eyes

Must wake with dawn in bonds. — Douglas, I pray,

If it be not but as a flash in sleep, And no true light now breaking, tell

me you,
That were my prison's friend: I will

believe
I am free as fire, free as the wind, the

night, All glad fleet things of the airier ele-

ment
That take no hold on earth; for even

like these Seems now the fire in me that was my heart,

And is a song, a flame, a burning

That moves before the sun at dawn, and fades

With fierce delight to drink his breath and die.

If ever hearts were stabbed with joy to

This that cleaves mine should do it, and one sharp stroke

Pierce through the thrilled and trembling core like steel,

bling core like steel,
And cut the roots of life. Nay, I am
crazed.

To stand and babble like one mad with wine,

Stung to the heart and bitten to the

With this great drink of freedom; ohi such wine

As fills man full of heaven, and in his veins

Becomes the blood of gods. I would fain feel

That I were free a little, ere that sense
Be put to use: those walls are fallen
for me,

Those waters dry, those gaolers dead, and this

The first night of my second reign, that here

Begins its record. I will talk no more. Nor waste my heart in joyous words, nor laugh

To set my free face toward the largeeyed sky,

Against the clear wind and the climbing moon, And take into mine eyes and to my

breast

The whole sweet night and all the stars

The whole sweet night and all the stars of heaven,

But put to present work the heart and hand

That here rise up a queen's. Bring me to horse:

We will take counsel first of speed

We will take counsel first of speed, and then

Take time for counsel.

Beaton. Madam, here at hand

The horses wait: Lord Seyton rides with us

Hence to Queen's Ferry, where beyond the Forth

We reach Claude Hamilton, who with fresh steeds

Expects us; to Long Niddry thence, and there

Draw rein among the Seytons, ere again

We make for Hamilton, whose walls should see

The sun and us together.

Queen. Well devised.

Where is the girl that fled with us, and gave

These garments for my surety? She shall have

Her part in my good hour, that in mine ill

Did me good service.

Ricarton. Madam, she must stay: We have not steeds enough, and those

we have

May bear no load more than perforce they must.

Or we not hope to speed. Queen. Nay, she shall go,

Not bide in peril of mine enemies here

While we fly scathless hence. Girl. Most gracious queen,

Of me take no such care: I am well content

They should do with me all they would, and I

Live but so long to know my queen as safe

As I for her die gladly.

Ricarton. She says well: Get we to horse. I must ride south to

My kinsfolk, and with all our Hepburn

Seize on Dunbar; whence northward I

may bear Good tidings to your lord.

Queen. God make them good

That he shall hear of me, and from his mouth

Send me good words and comfort! You shall ride

Straight from Lord Seyton's with my message borne

To all good soldiers of your clan and mine. And wake them for our common lord's

dear love To strike once more, or never while

they live Be called but slaves and kinless: then

to him For whom the bonds that I put off to-

Were borne and broken. - Douglas, of To marriage with our cousin's of that name

Most tender and most true to her that For fault of other stay. For mine own

Of women most unfriended, and of I would stand rather on Dumbartou queens

Most abject and unlike to recom pense,

Take in your hand the hand that it set With these six thousand ranged about free.

And lead me as you led me forth of bonds

To my more perfect freedom. - Sirs, to [Exeunt.

Scene VIII. - Hamilton Castle.

The QUEEN, ARGYLE, and HUNTLEY. Queen. I ever thought to find your faiths again

When time had set me free; nor shall my love

To my good friends be more unprofitable

Than was my brother's, from whose promised hand

Both have withdrawn the alliance of your own

To plight once more with mine: your son, my lord,

And, noble sir, your brother, will not

Of worthier wedlock and of trustier

Than should have bound them to a traitor's blood.

His daughter, and the sister of his wife, Whom he so thought to honor, and in them

Advance his counsels and confirm his cause, Through your great names allied, who

now take part More worthily with one long over-

thrown, And late re-risen with many a true man's

And royally girt round with many a friend's;

Nor need we lay upon our kinsmen here

All our hope's burden, nor submit our hand

Arbroath

mind.

Walled in with Fleming's spears, than here sit fast

the walls

That five days' suns have brought to strengthen me

Since I fled hither in these poor same weeds

That yet for need I wear. Now, by the

I had that night to feel my horse be-

Bound like my heart that through those darkling ways

Shot sunwards to the throne, I do not

think
Thus to sit long at wait, who have the

hands Subscribed here of so many loyal lords To take no thought but of their faith to

Nor let dissension touch their hearts

again

Till I sit crowned as arbitress of all When the great cause is gained. Each

bloodless day
Makes our foes greater: from Dunbar

Lord Hume,
Who thence with hand too swift cut off
our friends.

Brings now six hundred to my brother's

Who hangs hard by us; and from Edinburgh

Grange leads his hundreds; all the Glasgow folk,

For love of Lennox, with the Lothian carles,

Draw round their regent hither; and God knows

These are no cowards nor men vile esteemed

That stand about him: better is he served

Of them than we of Herries, whose false wit

Works with an open face and a close heart

For other ends than live upon his tongue,

And fill with protestation those loud lips

That plead and swear on both sides; he would stand

My counsellor, yet has not craft enough To draw those enemies hence that watch us here By tumult raised along ...e border side For none to quell but Murray, who was

From Glasgow where he lies yet to Dumfries.

But halts to gather head, and fall on us When we set forth; which by my private will

I would not yet, but that my kinsmen yearn

To bid him battle; and with victory won Seize to themselves the kingdom by my hand,

Which they should wield then at their will, and wed

To their next heir's: so should ye have their seed

For kings of Scotland, who were leagued ere this

With our main foes, and to their hands but late

By composition and confederacy

Would have given up my life to buy their ends

Even with the blood whose kinship in their veins

They thought should make them royal.

Argyle. We must fear These days that fleet, and bring us no

more strength,

Bring to the regent comfort and good

Bring to the regent comfort and good hope From England of a quiet hand main-

tained
Upon the borders, and such present
peace

As fights against us there upon his side, While he stands fast and gathers friends, who had

But common guard about him when your grace

Fled hither first, yet would not at the

For dread of our near neighborhood turn back

With that thin guard to Stirling; and by this

The chiefs of all his part are drawn to him,

Morton and Mar, Semple with Ochil

And they that wrung forth of your royal

The writing that subscribed it kingdomless:

All these are armed beneath him. Oueen. These are strong,

Yet are our friends not weaker: twain alone,

You twain with whom I speak, being on my side,

I would not fear to bide the feud of these:

And here are Cassilis, Eglinton, Mont-

Ross, Crawford, Errol, Fleming, Sutherland,

Herries with Maxwell, Boyd and Oliphant,

And Livingstone, and Beaumont that was sent

To speak for France as with mine uncle's tongue

Pleading with those my traitors for that life

Which here he finds enfranchised; and all these

As one true heart to me and faithful hand,

In God's name and their honor's leagued as friends

Who till mine enemies be cast down will know Naught save their duty to me, that no

Shall rend in sunder, and no privy jar Rive one from other that stands fast by

This have they sworn; and, by my trust in them.

I will not doubt with favor or with force To quell the hardiest heart set opposite. Have I not sent forth word of amnesty To every soul in Scotland free save these,

The top and crown of traitors, Morton first:

And Lindsay, from whose hand I took a pledge

To be redeemed with forfeit of his head; Semple, that writ lewd ballads of my love,

And that good provost whom I swore to give,

For one night's prison given me in his house,

A surer gaol for narrower resting-place Than that wherein I rested not; and last

Balfour, that gave my lord's trust up and mine?

Upon these five heads fallen will I set foot

When I tread back the stair that mounts my throne.

All others shall find grace: yea, though their hearts

Were set more stark against me and their hands

More dangerous aimed than these; for this God knows

My heart more honours and shall ever love

A hardy foe more than a coward friend; And Hume and Grange, mine enemies well approved,

Could love or recompense reknit their faiths

To my forsworn allegiance, in mine eyes

Should stand more clear than unrevolted men

Whose trustless faith is farther from my trust

Than from my veins the nearness of their blood.

I am not bitter-hearted, nor take pride
To keep the record of wrongs done to
me

For privy hate to gnaw upon, and fret Till all its wrath be wroken; I desire

Not blood so much of them that seek mine own

As victory on them, who being but subdued

For me may live or die my subjects:
this

I care not if I win with liberal words
Or weapons of my friends, for love or
fear,

Or by their own dissensions that may spring

And blossom to my profit; and I hold Nor fear nor grief grievous nor terri-

That might buy victory to me, for whose sake

Peril and pain seem pleasant, and all else

That men thirst after as I thirst for this -

Wealth, honour, pleasure, all things

weighed therewith -

Seem to my soul contemptible and vile. Nor would I reign that I might take revenge,

But rather be revenged that I might

reign.

For to live conquered and put on defeat, To sit with humbled head and bear base life.

Endure the hours to mock me, and the

days

To take and give me as a bondslave up For night by night to tread on - while death lives.

And may be found, or man lay hold on

him,

I will not have this to my life, but die. I know not what is life that outlives

But I will never: when my power were

My kingdom gone, my trust brought down, my will

Frustrate, I would not live one heartless hour

To think what death were gentlest; none so sharp But should be softer to my bosom

found

Than that which felt it strike. Huntley. You speak as ever

Your own high soul and speech; no spirit on earth

Was ever seen more kinglike than lifts

With yours our hearts to serve you for its sake

as these have served that here would speak with you.

Enter BEATON and MARY BEATON.

To whom our loves yield place. [Exeunt ARGYLE and HUNTLEY.

Queen. My chance were ill If to no better love your loves gave

Than that which makes us friends. -You are come betimes,

If you come ready now to ride; here lie The letters you must bear: the cardinal's this.

Mine uncle's of Lorraine, to whose kind hand

Did I commend the first news of my flight

Sent from Lord Seyton's while our horses breathed;

By this shall he receive my mind writ large,

And turn his own to help me. Look you say

Even as I write, you left me in such mind

As he would know me, - for all past faults done

Bent but to seek of God and of the world

Pardon; as knowing that none but only

Has brought me out of bonds, and inly

In perfect purpose for his mercy shown To show a thankful and a constant

As simple woman or as queen of Scots, In life and death fast cleaving to his Church.

As I would have him that shall read believe

My life to come shall only from his lips Take shape and likeness, by their breath alone

Still swayed and steered; to whom you know I look

For reconciling words that may subdue To natural pity of my laboring cause

The queen that was my mother, and her son

My brother king that in my husband's

Sits lineal in succession. Say too this, That without help I may not hold mine own;

And therefore shall he stand the more my friend.

And do the kindlier, the more haste he makes

With all good speed to raise and to despatch

A levy of a thousand harquebusmen

To fill the want up of my ranks, that

Look leaner than mine enemies'. This for France.

And this to the English queen delivering say,

I look, being free now, for that help of hers

That in my last years' bonds not once or twice

I had by word of promise, and not doubt

This year to have indeed; which if I may,

When from her hand I take my crown again,

I shall thenceforth look for no other friend.

And try no further faith. This private

In London to the ambassador of Spain Fail not to bear, that being set round with spies

I may not write; but he shall tell his king

The charges that men cast on me are false,

And theirs the guilt that held me in their bonds

Who stand in spirit firm to one faith with him

From whom I look for counsel. I well think

My sister's love shall but desire to hold A mean betwixt our parties, and pronounce

On each side judgment, as by right and might

'Twixt mine and me the imperial mediatress,

Commanding peace, controlling war, that must

Determine this dark time, and make alone

An end of doubt and danger; which perchance

May come before her answer. Haste, and thrive.

[Exit BEATON.

Now, what say you? shall fortune stand our friend

But long enough to seem worth hope or fear,

Or fall too soon from us for hope to help

r fear to hurt more than an hour of chance

Might make and unmake? This were now my day

To try the soothsaying of men's second sight

Who read beyond the writing of the hour,

And utter things unborn: now would I know,

And yet I would not, how my life shall move

And toward what end forever; which to know
Should help me not to suffer, nor

should help me not to suffer, nor undo

One jot that must be done or borne of me,

Nor take one grain away. I would not know it;

For one thing haply might that knowledge do,

Or one thing undo, — to bring down the heart

Wherewith I now expect it. We shall know,

When we shall suffer, what God's hour will bring;

If filed with wrath full from his heavy.

If filled with wrath full from his heavy hand,
Or gently laid upon us. I do think,

If he were wroth with aught once done of me. That anger should be now fulfilled, and

this
His hour of comfort: for he should not

stand,
For his wrath's sake with me, mine

enemies' friend,
Who are more than mine his enemies.

Never yet

Did I desire to know of God or man What was designed me of them; nor

will now
For fear desire the knowledge. What

I may,
That will I foil of all men's enmities,

And what I may of hope and good success

Take, and praise God. Yet thus much would I know,

If in your sight, who have seen my whole life run

One stream with yours since either had its spring,

My chance to come look foul or fair again

By this day's light and likelihood.

Mary Beaton. In sooth,

No soothsayer am I; yet so far a seer, That I can see but this of you and me, We shall not part alive.

Queen. Dost thou mean well?

Thou hast been constant ever at my hand

And closest when the worst part of my

Came closest to me; firm as faith or

Hast thou stood by my peril and my pain,

And still, where I found these, there found I thee:

And where I found thee, these were not far off.

When I was proud and blithe (men said) of heart,

And life looked smooth and loving in mine eyes,

Thou wouldst be sad and cold as autumn winds,

Thy face discomfortable, and strange thy speech,

Thy service joyless; but when times grew hard,

And there was wind and fire in the clear heaven.

Then wast thou near; thy service and thy speech

Were glad and ready; in thine eyes thy soul

Seemed to sit fixed at watch as one that waits And knows, and is content with what

shall be. Nor can I tell now if thy sight should

put More faith in me, or fear, to trust or

doubt The chance forefigured in thee; for

thou art As 'twere my fortune, faithful as man's

fate, Inevitable. I cannot read the roll

That I might deem were hidden in thy hand.

Writ with my days to be, nor from As who may think to see them one day thine eyes

Take light to know; for fortune is too blind

As man that knows not of her; and thyself, That art as 'twere a type to me and

sign Incognizable, art no more wise than I

To say what I should hope and fear to learn,

Or why, from thee.

Mary Beaton. This one thing I know

That hope nor fear need think to feed upon,

That I should part from you alive, or vou

Take from me living mine assurance vet To look upon you while you live, and trace

To the grave's edge your printed feet with mine.

Queen. Wilt thou die too?

Mary Beaton. Should I so far, so long,

Follow my queen's face, to forsake at last.

And lose my name for constancy? or

Whose eyes alive have slain so many men, Want, when death shuts them, one to

die of you Dying, who had so many loving lives

To go before you living?

Queen. Thou dost laugh

Always, to speak of death; and at this time

God wot it should beseem us best to smile

If we must think upon him. I and thou Have so much in us of a single heart, That we can smile to hear of that or

Which sickens and makes bleed faint hearts for fear.

And well now shall it stand us both in

To make ours hard against all chance, and walk

Between our friends and foes indifferently

shift

From hate to love, and love again to hate,

As time with peaceable or warlike hand Shall carve and shape them; and to go thus forth,

And make an end, shall neither at my

Deject me nor uplift in spirit, who pass Not gladly nor yet loathly to the field

That these my present friends have in my name

Set for the trial of my death or life.

Thou knowest long since God gave me cause to say

I saw the world was not that joyous thing

Which men would make it, nor the happiest they

That lived the longest in it: so I thought
That year the mightiest of my kinsmen
fell.

Slain by strong treason; and these five years gone

Have lightened not so much my life to

That I should love it more, or more should loathe

That end which love or loathing, faith or fear,

Can put not back nor forward by a day. [Exeunt.

## Scene IX. - Langside.

MURRAY, MORTON, HUME, LINDSAY, OCHILTREE, SIR WILLIAM DOUGLAS, KIRKALDY, and their forces.

Murray. They cannot pass our place of vantage here,

To choose them out a likelier. Let our lines

Lie close on either side the hollow strait Flanked as the hill slopes by those cottage walls,

While here the head of our main force stands fast

With wings flung each way forth: that narrow street

Shall take them snared and naked. Sir W. Douglas. I beseech you, If you suspect no taint or part in me Of treason in our kin, that I may have The first of this day's danger

Murray. No man here,

Of all whose hearts are armed for Scot land, hath

First place in this day's peril, no man last;

But all one part of peril, and one place

To stand and strike, if God be good to us,

In the last field that shall be fought for

Upon this quarrel. Who are they that

The main of the queen's battle? Kirkaldy. On their left

Lord Herries, and Argyle in front, with him

Claude Hamilton and James of Evandale

Bring up their turbulent ranks.

Lindsay. Why, these keep none

That crowd against us; horse and mingled foot

Confound each other hurtling as they come

Sheer up between the houses. *Murray*. Some default

That maims the general strength has in their need

Held them an hour delaying; our harquebusmen,

Two thousand tried, the best half of our foot,

Keep the way fast each side even to this height Where stands our strength in the open.

We shall have,

If aught win through of all their chiv-

alry, Some sharp half-hour of hand to-hand

at last

Ere one thrust other from this brow. —

Lord Hume, Keep you the rear of our right wing that

looks

Toward Herries and his horsemen; Ochiltree,

Stand you beside him; Grange and Lindsay here

Shall bide with me the main front of their fight

When these break through our guard Let word be given That no man when the day is won shall dare

Upon our side to spill one drop of blood That may be spared of them that yield or fly.

[Exeunt.

Scene X. — Another Part of the Field.

Enter HERRIES and SEYTON, with their soldiers.

soldiers.

Herries. If they of our part hold the

hill-top yet,

For all our leader's loss we have the day.

Seyton. They stand this half-hour locked on both sides fast,

And grappling to the teeth. I would to God

When for faint heart and very fear Argyle

Fell from his horse before the battle met,

The devil had writhed his neck round;
whose delay

At point to charge first maimed us; else
by this

We had scattered them as crows.

Make up again,

And drive their broken lines in on the rear
While those in front stand doubtful.

Charge once more, Enter Ochiltree and Hume, with

soldiers.

And all this side is ours. — Lord Ochil-

Yield, in the queen's name.

Ochiltree. In the king's I stand

To bid his traitors battle.

[They fight; OCHILTREE falls.

Herries. Stand thou too,

Or give us place: I had rather have to-day

At my sword's end thee than a meaner man

To try this cause.

*Hume.* This edge of mine shall try Which side and steel be truer.

[They fight; HUME is wounded. Seyton. God and the queen!

Set on; this height once ours, this day is too,

And all days after

Herries. Halt not yet, good friends, Till with our bright swords we have crowned the hill

Whereon they stand at grapple. Close again,

And we ride lords at large of the free field

Whence these fall hurled in sunder. Seyton. To the height!

Our fellows are fast locked yet with our foes:

Make up there to their comfort.

Enter Lindsay, Kirkaldy, Sir Wil-Liam Douglas, young Ochiltree, with soldiers.

Lindsay. Sirs, not yet:

Ere ye win through, there be more spears to break

Than there in fight are fastened. Stand, or yield.

Herries. The Highland folk that doubtfully held off

Are fallen upon our flank: hear you the noise?

Back, sirs, bear back: we are sped.

[Exit with his followers.

Sevton. The day is gone:

Let life go after; for I will not fly
To meet my queen's face as a beaten
man.

Enter MURRAY, MORTON, etc., with soldiers.

Murray. Charge once, and then sheathe swords; the field is ours:

They fly now both ways broken. Some one spur

To bid those knaves that howl upon the

Cut short their quest of blood. They were too slack

Who are now so hot, when first the hunt was up:

They shall not flesh those fangs on flying men

That in the fight were bloodless.

Scyton. Men, stand fast; Let not the currish cry of Highland hounds

Bark on your fugitive quarry: here a

May fall not like a stag or harried hare,

But die more soldier-like than in the toils

With their loud pack upon him. Young Ochiltree. Die then here,

And pay me for my father, if God please

My life with his shall lie not on thy hand,

But thine on mine as forfeit.

[They fight; SEYTON falls.

Murray. Slay him not:

I say, put up your sword.

Young Ochiltree. Sir, pardon me.

There bleeds my father yet: he too shall die.

Murray. Young man, nor he nor any of his part

When I say, Live. Take up your sword again;

And by this hand that struck it from your own

Be ruled, and learn what loyal use it hath.

Which is not on its prisoner. Send forth word

That none take life of any man that yields.

Pursue, but slay not; for the day is won, And this last battle ended that shall see By Scottish hands the reek of Scotsmen slain

Defame the face of Scotland. While I live,

If God as on this day be good to her,
Her eyes shall look on her own blood
no more.

[Execunt.

Scene XI.—The Heights near Langside.

The QUEEN, MARY BEATON, FLEMING, BOYD, and young MAXWELL.

Queen. This is the last time I shall look on war:

Upon this day I know my fate is set As on a sword's point. Does the fight stand still,

That we see nothing on that hill's brow stir

Where both sides lashed together?

Fleming. If the light

Tell mine eyes truth that reel with watching, both

Stand with spears crossed and locked so hard, and points

So fast inwound with such inveteracy, That steel can thrust not steel an inch away,

Nor foot push foot a hair's-breadth back that hangs

On the hill's edge, and yields not. Hark! the noise

Grows sharper and more various in its

Than first it was: there comes upon the

Some change for good or ill; but for my charge,

I would not say, Would God my hand were there!

But take its chance upon it.

Queen. Be content

To stand this day our soldier at her side Who will not live to lay such charge again

On them that love her. Lo there! on the left

They charge again from our part.

Maxwell. There it is

My father fights: his horse are they that make

The hill's length rock and lighten as a sea.

Look where the waves meet as that wind of steeds Sweeps them together; how they reel

and fall

There with the shock from under of the storm

That takes in rear and breaks their guard, and leaves

The right wing of the rebels cloven in

The right wing of the rebels cloven in twain,

And in the cleft their first men fallen that stood

Against the sea-breach. Oh! this gallant day

Shows us our fortune fair as her fair face

For whom we came to seek it, and the crown

That it gives back more glorious.

Queen. If we knew

How fares our van — Nay, go not from me one,

Lest we be scattered.

Boyd. Hear you not a cry As from the rear, a note of ruin, sent Higher than the noise of horsemen; and therewith

A roar of fire as though the artillery

Spake all at once its heart untimely out? Pray God our powder be not spent by chance,

And in its waste undo us! Oueen. My heart is sick,

Yet shall it not subdue me while my

Hath still a man's strength left. I was not thus—

I will not think what ever I have been. The worst day lasts no longer than a day.

And its worst hour hath but an hour of

life

Wherein to work us evil.

Mary Beaton. Here comes one

Hot-spurred with haste, and pale with this hour's news:

Now shall we know what work it had to do,

And what the next hour may.

Enter GEORGE DOUGLAS.

George Douglas. The day is lost.
There is but one way with us; here we stand

As in death's hand already. You must

Madam, while time be left or room for flight,

As if there be I know not. Fleming. Is the van

Broken?

George Douglas. Look up where late it stood so fast

That well-nigh for an hour the grappling ranks

Were so enlinked in front, the men behind

That fired across the rank of them before,

And hurled their pistols in their enemies' face

Above their comrades' heads that held the van

Saw them yet reeking on the spearshafts lodged

That caught them flatlong fallen athwart the staves

Fixed opposite and level, till a shot

Slew him that led behind the artillery
up
As the first round was ended on our

part, And straight a gunner's linstock

dropped, and gave
Fire to the powder-wagon.

Maxwell. But the horse —

We saw my father's with Lord Seyton's horse Hurl up against the left side round the

hill,
And break their right wing in the rear.

George Douglas. Ye saw?

But not who brought them rescue, and bore back

Your father's force with might and ruin: Grange

And Lindsay, with my brother third, who fights

With the more bitter heart and hate today

For our name's sake to purge him of my deed,

And wreak him on my friends; and would to God,

But for the service' sake I had to do, He had met me whom perchance he sought, and slain,

Ere I had borne this news out of the fight

To bid you fly!

Queen. Where will God set mine end?

I am wearied of this flying from death
to death

That is my life, and man's: where'er I

From God and death I fly not; and even here

It may be they must find me.

Mary Beaton. Nay, not yet:

Take heart again, and fly.

Oucen. Oh! this I knew, —

Even by thine eyes I knew it a great while since

As now by mine. Our end of fear is come,

That casts out hope as well. Let us make hence.

Perchance our help is in Dumbarton

Upon the rock where I would fain at first

Have set my feet. - How say you, Fleming, now?

May we there make us fast?

George Douglas. The ways thronged

With arms and noise of enemies; everywhere

The land is full of death and deadly

From throats that gape for blood; the regent's horse

Hold all the highway; and the straiter lanes

Stand thick with peasant folk whose hands are armed

With staves and sickles in their rage caught up

To strike at you for fault of sword or

Wherewith to charge us flying: no way is left

But south to Galloway and Lord Herries' land.

Where you may breathe but for a doubtful day

In the sea's sight of refuge. Maxwell. In God's name,

Take his good counsel, madam; as you

The noble Douglas wise and true, believe

So shall you find my father's men and mine

In this great need.

Queen. Come, help me then to horse; If I must ride some hundred miles to breathe.

As we must fly no less, I think, or fall Among our foes that follow, in my mind

The worst it were not, nor the unkindliest death,

To die in saddle. I will not give again, So please it God, into mine enemies' hands

My body up for bondage. Twice or

I have ridden hard by stars of March or May,

With false or true men to my left and right,

The wild night through, for death or kingly life;

And if I ride now with few friends at hand.

I have none false of them; or if as

One ride with me that had my hate alive,

Who rode with me to his own grave, and now

Holds me in chase toward mine, - O thou that wast

My hate and husband, whom these men to-day

Take on them to revenge, and in thy

Turn all men's hearts against me that were born

Mine, and all swords that served me! if thou be

A shadow at hand, a ghost unreconciled,

That waits to take his triumph, hear and see

If in this hour that smites me, which is

Thou find one thought in me that bows my heart,

One pang that turns it from the thing it was.

One pulse that moves me to repent or

For what was done or shall be; if thou have

But so much power upon me to be called

Less hateful or more fearful, and thy death With aught of dread have clothed the

thought of thee That thy life had not: if thou seest me

Then must thou see too that thou shalt

not see, In death or life, one part of spirit or

sense In me that calls thee master. To God's

I give the rest; but in mine own I hold The perfect power for good or evil days

To keep the heart I had, and on myself

Lose not one jot of lordship: so may God

Love me no less, and be no slower, I think,

To help my soul than theirs more vile than mine

And made for chance to mar, whereon their fate

Has power as on their bodies. If he will,

Now should he help, or never; for we leave

A field more fatal to us, and day more foul,

Than ever cast out hope. I am loath to go

More than to die; yet, come what will soe'er,

I shall no more. — Thou told'st me not of this,

But yet I learnt it of thee. Come, we have

One dark day less of doom to see and live,

Who have seen this, and die not. Stay by me:

I know thou wilt: if I should bid thee

go, It were but even as if I bade thee

Stay
Who hast as far to flee from death as I.
[Exeunt.

Scene XII. - Dundrennan Abbey.

The QUEEN and HERRIES.

Queen. Talk not to me of France. this man it was

That gave his tongue to serve my kinsmen's plea,

Who fain had seen me plight at Hamilton To their Arbroath my hand and king-

dom; nay, I will not seek my fate at Catherine's

hand,
Nor on those lips that were my moth-

Nor on those tips that were my mother's watch

My life hang weighed between a word and smile, Nor on that sleek face of the Floren-

tine

Read my doom writ, nor in her smooth swart cheek

See the blood brighten with desire of mine.

I will not live or die upon her tongue Whose hate were glad to give me death or life

More hateful from her giving; and I know

How she made proffer to my last year's lords

To take me from their bondage to her own.

And shut my days up cloistered; even such love

Should France afford me now that in men's sight

I stand yet lower, as fallen from this year's hope

To live discrowned forever. Tell him this

Who rode with you behind me from the field,

And bid him bear his mistress word of me

As one that thinks not to be made the mean

For them to weave alliance with my foes,

And with the purchase of my bartered blood

Buy back their power in Scotland.

Herries. I shall say it.

Yet this man's friendship, madam,

might find faith,
Who by so wild a way has followed

Who by so wild a way has followed you

To this third day that sees your flight at end,

Where you may sit some forty days secure

In trust and guard of mine. Queen. Ay, here I might,

Were I well weary with my two nights' sleep

On this hard earth that was my naked bed

Whom it casts out of kingdom; but, my lord,

For thirty leagues and more of ricden ground,

And two days' fare of peasants' meal and milk,

I am not yet nigher but by two days to death,

Nor spent in spirit for weariness or fear,

Nor in my body broken, that my need Should hold me here in bonds, or on your faith

Lay a new charge of danger. Here, you say,

And Beaumont with you, I may bide awhile

The levy of my friends whose rallying force

May gather to me, or in their default Hence to Dumbarton may I pass by

sea, Or forth to France with safer sails, and

What faith is there in friendship. Now my mind

Is nowise here to tarry: your true love Shall not for guerdon of its trust and

Be tried again with peril, that as well May be put by for your faith's sake and mine

So mutually made much of; nor shall they,

Whose wounds run red yet from their regent's hand

That on this border laid so sore a scourge

As late their blood bore witness, for my sake

()r give their blood again or lose their

Or give their blood again, or lose their faith

That should for me be proven, and being found true

Bring them to death should we twice fail, or false
Turn their safe life to shame. This

shall not be;

But I, content to make no trial of these, Will hold them true, and leave them unessayed

To live in honor. Friends I yet should have

Whose peace and life lie not in those men's hands

That would make prey of mine; their faith is firm

And their hearts great as mine own hope in them

Who look toward me from England; all the north

No less desires me than I need their love,

To lift our creed and cause up that lies low,

But wounded not to death. I have their names

Who first I think will meet me face to face,

And lay their loyal hands in mine, and pledge

Their noble heads for surety; lord and knight

Whose fathers yielded up their lives for faith

Shall fail not now to seek me cast out hence,

And gird me fast with all their following round

And stalwart musters of their spearmen raised

To do me service of stout heart and steel

For these lords' sake that call me lady;

That bear the whole might of this northern land Upon their blazon, and the grace and

strength

Of their old honor with them to that

side That they shall serve on; first the two

great earls, Then Dacre, Norton, Swinburne, Markinfield,

With all their houses, all the border's flower

Of ancient faith and fame; had I but

To rise up when I call, and do me right, I were not poorly friended, with no

Than this for trust to lean on. But I

think
To find not such friends only as their

name
And cause should make in danger fast to mine,

To link our names in all men's eyes that

Of faith in man forever: even the queen My sister's self shall fight upon my side, Being either found my friend for whom she swore,

If I were slain, to fill this land with fires,

Or, casting off my cause and me, stand up

As much their enemy that partake my faith

As mine who lack not friends in all her land

That in this cause cast off will strike at her

For God's sake on my party. But indeed

I look to find not such a foe of her

As should have heart or wit to fight with me,

Though she had will who has not; for her mind,

Still moving like a blown and barren

Has yet not ever set so far toward storm Or so much shifted from its natural

As to seem safe or prosperous for their sails

Who traffic for my ruin; and I fear

No wind of change that may breathe sharp on me

When once I stand in mine own name to speak

Before her face and England's. If she will,

By her shall I come back to reign her friend:

If not by her, then by their loves and

Who shall put off her sovereignty for mine.

There is not and there needs no better way

Than here lies fair before my feet, which yet

Are not so tired but they may tread it

through
To the good end. My heart is higher

again
Than ere that field it was, I know not

why, Which sent me hither. You shall write

for me Word to the warden of Carlisle, and

Your queen seeks covert for her crownless head With him the first in England; and thereon

Ere he send answer, or to-morrow set, Will I pass over.

Herries. I would fain believe

His queen were true of heart, and all your friends

As strong to serve as faithful: yet may she

Have better will than she has power to make,

As it would be, your servant; and the land

Is many-minded, rent with doubt in twain,

And full of fears and factions. You may pass,

Even in this hope that now builds up your heart,

To find less help at no less need than here

On darker ways and deadlier: yet your will

Shall if it hold be done.

Queen. Despatch, and write:

To stand before the gate of days to be,

And beat their doors for entrance, is more pain

Than to pass in, and look on life or death.

Here will I sleep within your ward tonight,

And then no more in Scotland. Nay,

make haste:
I would those hours were past that bold
me here.

Scene XIII. — The Shore of Solway Firth.

The Queen, Mary Beaton, Herries, George Douglas, Page and Attendants.

Queen. Is not the tide yet full? Herries. Come half an hour,

And it will turn; but ere that ebb begin.
Let me once more desire your pardon,
though

I plead against your pleasure. Here

you stand
Not yet dethroned from royal hope, not
yet

Discrowned of your great name, whose natural power

Faith here forgets not, nor man's loyal

Leaves off to honor: but gone hence, your name

Is but a stranger's, subject to men's

Alien and liable to control and chance That are the lords of exile, and command

The days and nights of fugitives; your hope

Dies of strange breath, or lives between strange lips;

And nor your will nor only God's beside

Is master of your peace of life, but theirs

Who, being the lords of land that harbors you,

Give your life leave to endure their empire. What

Can man do to you that a rebel may,

Which fear might deem as bad as banishment? Not death, not bonds, are bitterer than

his day On whom the sun looks forth of a

strange sky, Whose thirst drinks water from strange

hands, whose lips
Eat strangers' bread for hunger; who
lies down

In a strange dark, and sleeps not, and the light

Makes his eyes weep for their own morning, seen

On hills that helped to make him man, and fields Whose flowers grew round his heart's

root; day like night Denies him, and the stars and airs of

heaven
Are as their eyes and tongues who know

him not.
Go not to banishment: the world is

great, But each has but his own land in the

There is one bosom that gives each man milk,—

One country, like one mother: none sleeps well

Who lies between strange breasts; no lips drink life

That seek it from strange fosters. Go not hence:

You shall find no man's faith or love on earth

Like theirs that here cleave to you.

Queen. I have found,

And think to find, no hate of men on earth

Like theirs that here beats on me Hath this earth

Which sent me forth a five-years' child, and queen

Not even of mine own sorrows, to come back

A widowed girl out of the fair warm sun

Into the grave's mouth of a dolorous land

And life like death's own shadow, that began

With three days' darkness, — hath this earth of yours

That made mine enemies, at whose iron breast

They drank the milk of treason; this hard nurse,

Whose rocks and storms have reared no violent thing So montrous as men's angers, whose

wild minds
Were fed from hers and fashioned;
this that bears

None but such sons as being my friends are weak.

And strong, being most my foes, — hath it such grace

As I should cling to, or such virtue found

In some part of its evil as my heart

Should fear, being free, to part from? Have I lived,

Since I came here in shadow and storm, three days

Out of the storm and shadow? Have I seen

Such rest, such hope, such respite from despair,

As thralls and prisoners in strong dark ness may Before the light look on them? Hath there come

One chance on me of comfort, one poor change,

One possible content that was not born Of hope to break forth of these bonds, or made

Of trust in foreign fortune? Here, I knew,

Could never faith nor love nor comfort breed

While I sat fast in prison: ye, my friends.

The few men and the true men that were mine.

What were ye but what I was, and what help

Hath each love had of other, yours of mine,

Mine of your faith, but change of fight and flight,

Fear and vain hope and ruin? Let me

Who have been but grief and danger to my friends:

It may be I shall come with power again

To give back all their losses, and build

What for my sake was broken. Herries. Did I know it,

Yet were I loath to bid you part, and find

What there you go to seek; but knowing it not, My heart sinks in me, and my spirit is

sick. To think how this fair foot once parted

hence May rest thus light on Scottish ground

no more. Queen. It shall tread heavier when it

steps again On earth which now rejects it; I shall live

To bruise their heads who wounded me at heel,

When I shall set it on their necks. Come, friends, I think the fisher's boat hath hoised up

That is to bear none but one friend and | Should not with no more words be

me:

Here must my true men and their queen take leave,

And each keep thought of other, - Mv fair page,

Before the man's change darken on your chin,

I may come back to ride with you at

To a more fortunate field howe'er that be,

Ride you right on with better hap, and

As true to one of merrier days than mine

As on that night to Mary once your queen.

Douglas, I have not won a word of you:

What would you do to have me tarry? George Douglas. Die.

Queen. I lack not love, it seems, then, at my last.

That word was bitter; yet I blame it

Who would not have sweet words upon my lips

Nor in mine ears at parting. I should And stand not here as on a stage to

play My last part out in Scotland: I have

been Too long a queen too little. By my life.

I know not what should hold me here, or turn

My foot back from the boat-side, save the thought How at Lochleven I last set foot

aboard.

And with what hope, and to what end, and now

I pass not out of prison to my friends, But out of all friends' help to banish ment. -

Farewell, Lord Herries.

Herries. God go with my queen,

And bring her back with better friends than I! Queen. Methinks the sand yet cleav-

ing to my foot

shaken off.

Nor this my country from my parting

Pass unsaluted; for who knows what year

May see us greet hereafter? Yet take heed,

Ye that have ears, and hear me; and take note,

Ye that have eyes, and see with what last looks

Mine own take leave of Scotland. Seven years since

Did I take leave of my fair land of France,

My joyous mother, mother of my joy, Weeping; and now with many a woe

between, And space of seven years' darkness, I

depart From this distempered and unnatural

earth
That casts me out unmothered, and go

forth
On this gray, sterile, bitter, gleaming

sea
With neither tears nor laughter, but a

heart
That from the softest temper of its blood

Is turned to fire and iron. If I live,
If God pluck not all hope out of my
hand,

If aught of all mine prosper, I that go Shall come back to men's ruin, as a flame

The wind bears down, that grows against the wind,

And grasps it with great hands, and wins its way,

And wins its will, and triumphs; so shall I

Let loose the fire of all my heart to

On these that would have quenched it.

I will make

From sea to sea one furnace of the land.

Whereon the wind of war shall beat its wings

Till they wax faint with hopeless hope of rest,

And with one rain of men's rebellious

And with one rain of men's rebellious blood

Extinguish the red embers. I will leave No living soul of their blaspheming faith

Who war with monarchs: God shall see me reign

As he shall reign beside me, and his foes

Lie at my foot with mine; kingdoms and kings Shall from my heart take spirit, and at

my soul

Their souls be kindled to devour for

The people that would make its prey of them,

And leave God's altar stripped of sacrament

As all kings' heads of sovereignty, and make

Bare as their thrones his temples; I will set
Those old things of his holiness on

high That are brought low, and break be-

neath my feet
These new things of men's fashion; I
will sit

And see tears flow from eyes that saw me weep,

And dust and ashes and the shadow of death

Cast from the block beneath the axe that falls
On heads that saw me humbled: I will

do it,

Or bow mine own down to no royal end,

And give my blood for theirs if God's

And give my blood for theirs if God's will be,

But come back never as I now go forth With but the hate of men to track my way,

And not the face of any friend alive.

Mary Beaton. But I will never leave
you till you die.

## MARY STUART: A TRAGEDY.

άντὶ μὲν ἐχθρᾶς γλώσσης ἐχθρὰ γλῶσσα τελεισθω· τοὐφειλόμενον πράσσουσα δικη μέγ' ἀϋτεῖ·

άντὶ δὲ πληγῆς φονίας φονίαν πληγὴν τινέτω· δράσαντι παθεῖν, τριγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ.

Æscн. Cho. 309-315.

I DEDICATE THIS PLAY, NO LONGER, AS THE FIRST PART OF THE TRILOGY WHICH IT COMPLETES
WAS DEDICATED, TO THE GREATEST EXILE, BUT SIMPLY TO THE GREATEST MAN OF
FRANCE; TO THE CHIEF OF LIVING POETS; TO THE FIRST DRAMATIST OF HIS
AGE; TO MY BELOVED AND REVERED MASTER, VICTOR HUGO.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARY BEATON.
QUEEN ELIZABETH.
BARBARA MOWBRAY.
LORD BURCHLEY.
SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.
WILLIAM DAVISON.
ROBERT DUDLEY, Earl of Leicester.
GEORGE TALBOT, Earl of Shrewsbury.
EARL OF KENT.
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.
SIR THOMAS BROMLEY, Lord Chancellor.
POPHAM, Attorney-General.
EGERTON, Solicitor-General.
GAWDY, the Queen's Sergeant.
SIR DREW DRUKY.
Commissioners, Privy Councillors, S

MARY STUART.

SIR THOMAS GORGES.
SIR WILLIAM WADE.
SIR ANDREW MELVILLE.
ROBERT BEALE, Clerk of the Council.
CURLE and NAU, Secretaries to the Queen of Scots.
GORION, her Apothecary.
FATHER JOHN BALLARD,
ANTHONY BABINGTON,
CHIDIOCK TICHBORNE,
JOHN SAVAGE,
CHARLES TILNEY,
EDWARD ABINGTON,
THOMAS SALISBURY,
ROBERT BARNWELL,
THOMAS PHILLIPPS, Secretary to Waisingham.

MYAS PAULET.

M. DE CHÂTRAUNEUF.

M. DE BELLIÈVRE.

Commissioners, Privy Councillors, Sheriffs, Citizens, Officers, and Attendants,

TIME, FROM AUGUST 14, 1586, TO FEBRUARY 18, 1587.

## ACT I.—ANTHONY BABING-

Scene I. — Babington's Lodging.

A Veiled Picture on the Wall.

Enter Babington, Tichborne, Tilney, Abington, Salisbury, and Barnwell.

Babington. Welcome, good friends, and welcome this good day

That casts out hope, and brings in certainty

To turn raw spring to summer. Now not long

The flower that crowns the front of all

Shall bleach to death in prison; now the trust

That took the night with fire as of a star Grows red and broad as sunrise in our sight, Who held it dear and desperate once, now sure,

But not more dear, being surer. In my I hold this England and her brood, and

That time out of the chance of all her

Makes hopeful or makes fearful: days and years, Triumphs and changes bred for praise

or shame From the unborn womb of these un-

known, are ours

That stand yet noteless here; ours even as God's,

Who puts them in our hand as his, to wield

And shape to service godlike. None of you

But this day strikes out of the scroll of death.

And writes apart immortal: what we would.

That have we; what our fathers, brethren, peers,

Bled and beheld not, died and might not win,

That may we see, touch, handle, hold it fast. May take to bind our brows with. By

my life, I think none ever had such hap alive

As ours upon whose plighted lives are

The whole good hap and evil of the State.

And of the Church of God, and world of

And fortune of all crowns and creeds that hang

Now on the creed and crown of this our land.

To bring forth fruit to our resolve, and

What sons to time it please us; whose mere will

Is father of the future.

Tilney. Have you said? Babington. I cannot say too much of

so much good.

hear one while:

Your talk struts high and swaggers loud for joy,

And safely may perchance, or may not, here:

But why to-day we know not. Babington. No, I swear,

Ye know not yet, no man of us but one, No man on earth; one woman knows, and I.

I that best know her, the best begot of

And noblest: no king born so kingly souled.

Nor served of such brave servants.

Tichborne. What, as we?

Babington. Is there one vein in one of all our hearts

That is not blown aflame as fire with air

With even the thought to serve her? And, by God, They that would serve had need be

bolder found

Than common kings find servants. Salisbury. Well, your cause?

What need or hope has this day's heat brought forth

To blow such fire up in you? Babington. Hark you, sirs:

The time is come, ere I shall speak of

To set again the seal on our past oaths, And bind their trothplight faster than

With one more witness; not for shameful doubt,

But love and perfect honor. Gentlemen, Whose souls are brethren sealed and sworn to mine.

Friends that have taken on your hearts and hands

The selfsame work and weight of deed as I, —

Look on this picture: from its face to-

Thus I pluck off the muffled mask, and

Its likeness and our purpose. Ay, look here:

None of these faces but are friends of each.

Tilney. Say nothing, then, a little, and None of these lips unsworn to all the

What these have bound their souls to? And myself,

I that stand midmost painted here of

Have I not right to wear of all this ring

The topmost flower of danger? Who

Should crown and close this goodly circle up

Of friends I call my followers? There ye stand,

Fashioned all five in likeness of mere life.

Just your own shapes, even all the man but speech,

As in a speckless mirror; Tichborne, thou,

My nearest heart and brother next in

Then Abington, there Salisbury, Tilney there,

And Barnwell, with the brave bright Irish eve

That burns with red remembrance of the blood

Seen drenching those green fields turned brown and gray

Where fire can burn not faith out, nor the sword

That hews the boughs off lop the root there set

To spread in spite of axes. Friends, take heed: These are not met for nothing here in

show. Nor for poor pride set forth and boast-

ful heart To make dumb brag of the undone deed,

and wear The ghost and mockery of a crown

Before their hands have wrought it for their heads

Out of a golden danger, glorious doubt, An act incomparable, by all time's mouths

To be more blessed and cursed than all deeds done

In this swift fiery world of ours, that drives

None of these hands unplighted. Know On such hot wheels toward evil goals or good,

And desperate each as other; but that each,

Seeing here himself and knowing why here, may set

His whole heart's might on the instant work, and hence

Pass as a man rechristened, bathed anew.

And swordlike tempered from the touch that turns

Dull iron to the two-edged fang of steel Made keen as fire by water. So, I

Let this dead likeness of you, wrought with hands

Whereof ye wist not, working for mine

Even as ye gave them work, unwittingly, Quicken with life your vows and pur-

To rid the beast that troubles all the world

Out of men's sight and God's. Are ye not sworn

Or stand not ready girt at perilous need To strike under the cloth of state itself The very heart we hunt for?

Tichborne. Let not then

Too high a noise of hound and horn give note

How hot the hunt is on it, and ere we shoot

Startle the royal quarry; lest your cry Give tongue too loud on such a trail, and we

More piteously be rent of our own hounds

Than he that went forth huntsman too, and came

To play the hart he hunted. Babington. Ay, but, see,

Your apish poet's-likeness holds not here,

If he that fed his hounds on his changed flesh

Was charmed out of a man, and baved to death,

But through pure anger of a perfect maid:

For she that should of huntsmen turn us harts

Is Dian but in mouths of her own knaves.

And in paid eyes hath only godhead on, And light to dazzle none but them to death.

Yet I durst well abide her, and proclaim As goddess-like as maiden.

Barnwell. Why, myself

Was late at court in presence, and her

Fixed somewhile on me full in face; yet, 'faith.

I felt for that no lightning in my blood, Nor blast in mine as of the sun at noon To blind their balls with godhead: no, ye see,

I walk yet well enough.

Abington. She gazed at you?

Barnwell. Yes, 'faith: yea, surely: take a Puritan oath

To seal my faith for Catholic. God help,

Are not mine eyes yet whole, then? am I blind

Or maimed or scorched, and know not? By my head,

I find it sit yet none the worse for fear To be so thunder-blasted.

Abington. Hear you, sirs?

Tichborne. I was not fain to hear it. Barnwell. Which was he

Spake of one changed into a hart? by God,

There be some hearts here need no charm, I think.

To turn them hares of hunters; or if

Not harts but hinds, and rascal. Babington. Peace, man, peace!

Let not at least this noble cry of hounds Flash fangs against each other. See what verse

I bade write under on the picture here: These are my comrades, whom the peril's

Draws to it. How say you? will not all in the end

Prove fellows to me? how should one fall off Whom danger lures and scares not?

Tush! take hands;

It was to keep them fast in all time's sight

I bade my painter set you here, and me Your loving captain; gave him sight of

And order of us all in amity.

And if this yet not shame you, or your Be set as boys' on wrangling, yet,

behold.

I pluck as from my heart this witness forth Taking out a letter. To what a work we are bound to, -

even her hand

Whom we must bring from bondage, and again

Be brought of her to honor. This is

Mary the queen, sealed of herself and signed

As mine assured good friend forever.

Am I more worth, or Ballard? Tilney. He it was

Bade get her hand and seal to allow of

That should be practised; he is wise. Babington. Ay, wise!

He was in peril too, he said, God wot, And must have surety of her, he; but I, Tis I that have it, and her heart and

See all here else, her trust and her good

Who knows mine own heart of mine own hand writ

And sent her for assurance.

Salisbury. This we know: What we would yet have certified of you

Is her own heart sent back, you say, for

Babington. I say? not I, but proof says here, cries out

Her perfect will and purpose. Look you, first

She writes me what good comfort hath she had

To know by letter mine estate, and thus Reknit the bond of our intelligence,

As grief was hers to live without the

This great while past; then lovingly commends

In me her own desire to avert betimes

Our enemies' counsel to root out our faith

With ruin of us all; for so she hath shown All Catholic princes what long since

they have wrought Against the king of Spain; and all this

Against the king of Spain; and all this while

The Catholics naked here to all misuse Fall off in numbered force, in means and power,

And if we look not to it shall soon lack strength

To rise and take that hope or help by the hand

Which time shall offer them; and see

for this What heart is hers! she bids you know of me

Though she were no part of this cause, who holds

Worthless her own weighed with the general weal,—

She will be still most willing to this end To employ therein her life and all she

Or in this world may look for.

Tichborne. This rings well;
But by what present mean prepared
doth hers

Confirm your counsel? or what way set

So to prevent our enemies with good speed

That at the goal we find them not, and there

Fall as men broken?

Babington. Nay, what think you, man, Or what esteem of her, that hope should lack

Herein her counsel? hath she not been found

Most wary still, clear-spirited, bright of wit,

Keen as a sword's edge, as a bird's eye swift,

Man hearted ever? First, for crown

Man-hearted ever? First, for crown and base

Of all this enterprise, she bids me here Examine with good heed of good event What power of horse and foot among us all

We may well muster, and in every shire

Choose out what captain for them, if we lack

For the main host a general, — as, indeed,

Myself being bound to bring her out of bonds,

Or here with you cut off the heretic queen,

Could take not this on me, — what havens, towns,

What ports to north and west and south, may we

Assure ourselves to hold in certain hand

For entrance and receipt of help from France,

From Spain, or the Low Countries; in what place

Draw our main head together; for how long

Raise for this threefold force of foreign friends

Wage and munition, or what harbors choose

For these to land; or what provision crave

Of coin at need or armor; by what means

The six her friends deliberate to proceed; And, last, the manner how to get her

forth

From this last hold wherein she newly

From this last hold wherein she newly lies:

These heads hath she set down, and bids me take

Of all seven points counsel and com

With as few friends as may be of the chief
Ranged on our part for actors; and

thereon
Of all devised with diligent speed de-

spatch Word to the ambassador of Spain in

France,
Who, to the experience past of all the

estate
Here on this side aforetime that he hath,

Shall join goodwill to serve us.

Tilney. Ay, no more?

Of us no more I mean, who being most

To the English queen our natural mistress born

Take on our hands, her household pensioners',

The stain and chiefest peril of her blood Shed by close violence under trust; no word,

No care shown further of our enterprise That flowers to fruit for her sake?

Babington. Fear not that;

Abide till we draw thither — ay — she bids

Get first assurance of such help to come, And take thereafter, what before were vain.

Swift order to provide arms, horses,

Wherewith to march at word from every shire

Given by the chief; and save these principals

Let no man's knowledge less in place partake

The privy ground we move on, but set forth

For entertainment of the meaner ear We do but fortify us against the plot Laid of the Puritan part in all this

That have their general force now drawn

to head In the Low Countries, whence being

home returned
They think to spoil us utterly, and usurp
Not from her only and all else lawful

heirs
The kingly power, but from their queen

that is
(As we may let the bruit fly forth disguised)

Wrest that which now she hath, if she for fear

Take not their yoke upon her, and therefrom

Catch like infection from plague-tainted air

The purulence of their purity; with which plea

We so may stablish our confederacies As wrought but for defence of lands, lives, goods,

From them that would cut off our faith and these;

No word writ straight or given directly forth

Against the queen, but rather showing our will
Firm to maintain her and her lineal

heirs,

Myself (she saith) not named. Ha! gallant souls,

Hath our queen's craft no savor of sweet wit,

No brain to help her heart with?

Tichborne. But our end—

No word of this yet?

Babington. And a good word here, And worth our note, good friend: being

thus prepared, Time then shall be to set our hands on

work,
And straight thereon take order that

she may
Be suddenly transported out of guard,

Not tarrying till our foreign force come in,
Which then must make the hotter

Which then must make the hotter haste; and seeing

We can make no day sure for our design, Nor certain hour appointed when she

might
Find other friends at hand on spur of

the act
To take her forth of prison, ye should

About you always, or in court at

least,
Scouts furnished well with horses of
good speed

To bear the tiding to her and them whose charge

Shall be to bring her out of bonds, that

May be about her ere her keeper have

What deed is freshly done, — in any case,

Ere he can make him strong within the house

Or bear her forth of it; and need it

By divers ways to send forth two of three.

That one may pass if one be stayed nor this

Should we forget, to assay in the hour of need

To cut the common posts off: by this

May we steer safe, and fall not miser-

As they that labored heretofore here-

Through over-haste to stir upon this

Ere surety make us strong of strangers' aid.

And if at first we bring her forth of bonds.

Be well assured, she bids us - as I

She doubts not me that I should let this slip,

Forget so main a matter - well assured

To set her in the heart of some strong

Or strength of some good hold, where she may stay

Till we be mustered, and the ally drawn

For should the queen, being scathless of us yet

As we unready, fall upon her flight, The bird untimely fled from snare to

Should find, being caught again, a narrower hold,

Whence she should fly forth never, if cause indeed

Should seem not given to use her worse; and we

Should be with all extremity pursued, To her more grief; for this should grieve her more

Than what might heaviest fall upon her.

Tilney. Ay?

She hath had, then, work enough to do to weep

For them that bled before: Northumberland, The choice of all the north, spoiled,

banished, slain; Norfolk, that should have ringed the

fourth sad time The fairest hand wherewith fate ever

led

up So many an eye from sunlight.

Babington. By my head,

Which is the main stake of this cast, I

So many a man to deathward, or sealed

There is none worth more than a tear of hers

That man wears living or that man might lose,

Borne upright in the sun, or for her sake

Bowed down by theirs she weeps for. Nay, but hear:

She bids me take most vigilant heed, that all

May prosperously find end assured, and Conclude with me in judgment; to my-

self.

As chief of trust in my particular, Refers you for assurance, and com-

mends To counsel seasonable and time's advice

Your common resolution; and again,

If the design take yet not hold, as chance

For all our will may turn it, we should

Pursue her transport nor the plot laid

Of our so baffled enterprise; but say When this were done we might not come at her,

Being by mishap close guarded in the Tower

Or some strength else as dangerous, vet, she saith,

For God's sake leave not to proceed herein

To the utmost undertaking; for herself

At any time shall most contentedly Die, knowing of our deliverance from

the bonds Wherein as slaves we are holden.

Barnwell. So shall I,

Knowing at the least of her enfranchisement

Whose life were worth the whole blood shed o' the world

And all men's hearts made empty.

Babington. Ay, good friend,

Here speaks she of your fellows, that some stir

Might be in Ireland labored to begin Some time ere we take aught on us, that thence

The alarm might spring right on the part opposed

To where should grow the danger: she meantime

Should while the work were even in hand assay

To make the Catholics in her Scotland rise,

And put her son into their hands, that

No help may serve our enemies thence;

again,
That from our plots the stroke may

come, she thinks
To have some chief or general head of

all
Were now most apt for the instant end;

wherein
I branch not off from her in counsel,

yet
Conceive not how to send the ap-

pointed word
To the earl of Arundel now fast in

bonds
Held in the Tower she spake of late,
who now

Would have us give him careful note of this,

Him or his brethren; and from oversea Would have us seek, if he be there at large,

To the young son of dead Northumberland, And Westmoreland, whose hand and

name, we know, May do much northward; ay, but this

we know, How much his hand was lesser than his

name
When proof was put on either; and the

lord
Paget, whose power is in some shires

of weight To incline them us-ward; both may

now be had, And some, she saith, of the exiles principal,

If the enterprise be resolute once, with these

May come back darkling; Paget lies in Spain,

Whom we may treat with by his brother's mean,

Charles, who keeps watch in Paris.
Then in the end

She bids beware no messenger sent forth
That bears our counsel bear our letters:
these

Must through blind hands precede them, or ensue

By ignorant posts, and severally despatched;

And of her sweet wise heart, as we were fools,—

But that I think she fears not, — bids take heed

Of spies among us and false brethren, chief

Of priests already practised on, she saith,

By the enemy's craft against us. What! forsooth,

We have not eyes to set such knaves apart,

And look their wiles through, but should need misdoubt — Whom shall I say the least on all

our side?— Good Gilbert Gifford with his kind

boy's face
That fear's lean self could fear not?
But God knows

Woman is wise, but woman: none so bold,

So cunning none, God help the soft sweet wit, But the fair flesh with weakness taints

it: why,
She warns me here of perilous scrolls

to keep
That I should never bear about me.

That I should never bear about me, seeing

By that fault sank all they that fell before

Who should have walked unwounded else of proof,

Unstayed of justice. But this following word

Hath savor of more judgment: we should let

As little as we may our names be known.

Or purpose here, to the envoy sent from France.

Whom though she hears for honest, we

His master holds the course of his design

Far contrary to this of ours, which known

Might move him to discovery.

Tichborne. Well forewarned:

Fore-armed enough were now that cause at need

Which had but half so good an armor

To fight false faith or France in Babington. Peace a while;

Here she winds up her craft. She hath

long time sued To shift her lodging, and for answer

None but the castle of Dudley named as meet

To serve this turn; and thither may depart,

thinks, with parting summer; whence may we

Devise what means about those lands to lav

For her deliverance; who from present

May but by one of three ways be discharged:

When she shall ride forth on the moors that part

Her prison-place from Stafford, where few folk

Use to pass over, on the same day set, With fifty or threescore men, well horsed and armed. To take her from her keeper's charge,

who rides With but some score that bear but

pistols; next,

To come by deep night round the darkling house,

And fire the barns and stables, which being nigh Shall draw the household huddling

forth to help, And they that come to serve her, wearing each

A secret sign for note and cognizance. May some of them surprise the house, whom she

Shall with her servants meet and second; last,

When carts come in at morning, these being met

In the main gateway's midst may by device

Fall or be sidelong overthrown, and we Make in thereon, and suddenly possess The house, whence lightly might we bear her forth

Ere help came in of soldiers to relief Who lie a mile or half a mile away

In several lodgings. But, howe'er this end.

She holds her bounden to me all her days.

Who proffer me to hazard for her love, And doubtless shall as well esteem of

Or scarce less honorably, when she shall know

Your names who serve beneath me; so commends

Her friend to God, and bids me burn the word That I would wear at heart forever:

Lest this sweet scripture haply write

us dead. Where she set hand I set my lips, and

Rend mine own heart with her sweet name, and end.

Tears the letter.

Salisbury. She hath chosen a trusty servant.

Babington. Ay, of me?

What ails you at her choice? was this

That laid the ground of all this work, and wrought

Your hearts to shape for service? or perchance

The man was you that took this first on him,

To serve her dying and living, and put on

The blood-red name of traitor and the deed

Found for her sake not murderous?

Salisbury. Why, they say

First Gifford put this on you, Ballard next,

Whom he brought over to redeem your

Half lost for doubt already, and refresh The flagging flame that fired it first, and

Fell faltering half in ashes, whence his breath

Hardly with hard pains quickened it, and blew

The gray to red rekindling. Babington. Sir, they lie

Who say for fear I faltered, or lost heart

For doubt to lose life after: let such

It shames me not, though I were slow of will.

To take such work upon my soul and

As killing of a queen; being once assured,

Brought once past question, set beyond men's doubts

By witness of God's will borne sensibly, Meseems I have swerved not.

Salisbury. Ay, when once the word Was washed in holy water, you would

Lightly the name so hallowed of priests' lips That men spell murderer; but till Bal-

lard spake, The shadow of her slaying whom we

shall strike Was ice to freeze your purpose.

Tichborne. Friend, what then? Is this so small a thing, being English

born. To strike the living empire here at

heart That is called England? stab her present state,

Give even her false-faced likeness up to death.

With hands that smite a woman? I that speak,

Ye know me if now my faith be firm, and will

not me

To say I was not quick nor light of heart.

Though moved perforce of will unwillingly,

To take in trust this charge upon me.

Barnwell, I

With all good will would take, and give God thanks,

The charge of all that falter in it: by heaven, To hear in the end of doubts and

doublings heaves My heart up as with sickness. Why,

by this The heretic harlot that confounds our

hope Should be made carrion, with those following four

That were to wait upon her dead: all

Live yet to scourge God's servants, and we prate And threaten here in painting. By my

I see no more in us of life or heart

Than in this heartless picture.

Babington. Peace, again.

Our purpose shall not long lack life, nor they

Whose life is deadly to the heart of Much longer keep it: Burghley, Wal-

singham, Hunsdon and Knowles, all these four

names writ out, With hers at head they worship, are

but now As those five several letters that spell death.

In eyes that read them right. Give me but faith

little longer: trust that heart a

Which laid the ground of all our glories; think

I that was chosen of our queen's friends in France.

By Morgan's hand there prisoner for her sake

On charge of such a deed's device as ours

To do faith's bidding; yet it wrings Commended to her for trustiest, and a man

More sure than might be Ballard and more fit

To bear the burden of her counsels, — I Can be not undeserving, whom she trusts.

That ye should likewise trust me; seeing at first

She writes me but a thankful word, and this,

God wot, for little service; I return, For aptest answer and thankworthiest meed.

Word of the usurper's plotted end, and she

With such large heart of trust and liberal faith

As here ye have heard requites me: whom, I think,

For you to trust is no too great thing

For me to ask and have of all.

Tichborne. Dear friend,

Mistrust has no part in our mind of you More than in hers; yet she too bids take heed,

As I would bid you take, and let not slip

The least of her good counsels, which to keep

No whit proclaims us colder than herself

Who gives us charge to keep them, and to slight

No whit proclaims us less unserviceable Who are found too hot to serve her, than the slave

Who for cold heart and fear might fail. Babington. Too hot!

Why, what man's heart hath heat enough or blood

To give for such good service? Look you, sirs, This is no new thing for my faith to

keep,

My soul to feed its fires with, and my hope

Fix eyes upon for star to steer by: she That six years hence the boy that I was then, And page, ye know, to Shrewsbury,

gave his faith

and soul

For only lady and queen, with power

To lift my heart up and bow down mine eyes

At sight and sense of her sweet sovereignty,

Made thence her man forever; she whose look

Turned all my blood of life to tears and fire,

That going or coming, sad or glad (for vet She would be somewhile merry, as

though to give Comfort, and ease at heart her servants,

Weep smilingly to be so light of mind, Saying she was like the bird grown

blithe in bonds, That if too late set free would die for fear,

Or wild birds hunt it out of life; if

Put madness in me for her suffering's sake,

If joyous, for her very love's sake) still Made my heart mad alike to serve her, being

I know not when the sweeter, sad or blithe.

Nor what mood heavenliest of her, all whose change

Was as of stars and sun and moon in heaven. -

She is well content - ye have heard her — she, to die, If we without her may redeem our-

selves.

And loose our lives from bondage; but her friends

Must take, forsooth, good heed they be not, no,

Too hot of heart to serve her! And for me,

Am I so vain a thing of wind and smoke That your deep counsel must have care to keep

My lightness safe in wardship? I sought none, -

Craved no man's counsel to draw plain my plot,

to serve and worship with his body Need no man's warning to dispose my deed.

Have I not laid of mine own hand a snare

To bring no less a lusty bird to lure

Than Walsingham with proffer of myself

For scout and spy on mine own friends in France

To fill his wise wide ears with large report

Of all things wrought there on our side,

and plots
Laid for our queen's sake? and for all

his wit
This politic knave misdoubts me not,

whom ye
Hold yet too light and lean of wit to

pass

Unspied of wise men on our enemies' part,
Who have sealed the subtlest eyes up

of them all.

Ticuborne, That would I know: for

if they be not blind,
But only wink upon your proffer, seeing

More than they let your own eyes find or fear,

Why, there may lurk a fire to burn us all Masked in them with false blindness. *Babington*. Hear you, sirs?

Now, by the faith I had in this my friend, And by mine own yet flawless toward him, yea

By all true love and trust that holds men fast,

It shames me that I held him in this cause
Half mine own heart, my better hand

and eye, Mine other soul and worthier. Pray

you, go: Let us not hold you; sir, be quit of us;

Go home, lie safe, and give God thanks; lie close, Keep your head warm and covered.

Keep your head warm and covered. Nay, be wise;

We are fit for no such wise folk's fellowship,

No married man's who being bid forth

to fight Holds his wife's kirtle fitter wear for

Than theirs who put on iron: I did know it,

Albeit I would not know; this man that was,

This soul and sinew of a noble seed,

Love and the lips that burn a bridegroom's through

Have charmed to deathward, and in steel's good stead

Left him a silken spirit. Tichborne. By that faith

Which yet I think you have found as fast in me

As ever yours I found, you wrong me more

Than, were I that your words can make me not,

I had wronged myself and all our cause; I hold

No whit less dear, for love's sake even, than love,

Faith, honor, friendship, all that all my days

Was only dear to my desire, till now This new thing, dear as all these only

Made all these dearer. If my love be

Toward you, toward honor, or this cause, then think

I love my wife not either, — whom you know

How close at heart I cherish, — but in all
Play false alike. Lead now which way

you will,

And wear what likeness: though to all

men else
It look not smooth, smooth shall it

seem to me,
And danger be not dangerous; where
you go,

For me shall wildest ways be safe, and straight

straight
For me the steepest; with your eyes

and heart
Will I take count of life and death,

and think

No thought against your counsel; yea,

by heaven, I had vather follow and trust my friend,

and die, Than halt and hark mistrustfully be

hind To live of him mistrusted. Babington. Why, well said:

Strike hands upon it; I think you shall not find

A trustless pilot of me. Keep we fast, And hold you fast my counsel, we shall

The state high-builded here of heretic hope

Shaken to dust and death. Here comes more proof

To warrant me no liar. - You are welcome, sirs;

Enter BALLARD, disguised, and SAVAGE. Good father captain, come you plumed or cowled.

Or stoled or sworded, here at any hand The true heart bids you welcome.

Ballard. Sir, at none

Is folly welcome to mine ears or eves. Nay, stare not on me stormily: I say, I bid at no hand welcome, by no name, Be it ne'er so wise or valiant on men's lips,

Pledge health to folly, nor forecast

good hope

For them that serve her, I, but take of

Things ill done ill at any hand alike. Ye shall not say I cheered you to your death.

Nor would, though naught more dangerous than your death,

Or deadlier for our cause and God's in ours,

Were here to stand the chance of, and your blood,

Shed vainly with no seed for faith to SOW,

Should be not poison for men's hopes to drink.

What is this picture? Have ye sense or souls.

Eyes, ears, or wits to take assurance

Of how ye stand in strange men's eyes and ears,

How fare upon their talking tongues, how dwell

In shot of their suspicion, and sustain How great a work how lightly? Think ye not

These men have ears and eyes about your ways,

Walk with your feet, work with your hands, and watch

When we sleep sound and babble in your sleep?

What knave was he, or whose man sworn and spy,

That drank with you last night? whose hireling lip

Was this that pledged you, Master Babington,

To a foul quean's downfall and a fair queen's rise?

Can ye not seal your tongues from tavern speech,

Nor sup abroad but air may catch it back.

Nor think who set that watch upon your lips

Yourselves can keep not on them? Babington. What, my friends!

Here is one come to counsel, God be thanked.

That bears commission to rebuke us

Why, hark you, sir, you that speak judgment, you

That take our doom upon your double tongue

To sentence and accuse us with one breath, Our doomsman and our justicer for

Good Captain Ballard, Father Fortes-

Who made you guardian of us poor

men, gave Your wisdom wardship of our follies,

chose Your faith for keeper of our faiths, that

Were never taxed of change or doubted?

You. 'Tis you that have an eye to us, and

take note What time we keep, what place, what

company, How far may wisdom trust us to be wise

Or faith esteem us faithful; and your-

self Were once the hireling hand and

tongue and eye That waited on this very Walsingham To spy men's counsels and betray their blood

Whose trust had sealed you trusty? By God's light, A goodly guard I have of you, to

crave

What man was he I drank with yesternight,

What name, what shape, what habit, as, forsooth,

Were I some statesman's knave and spotted spy,

The man I served, and care dnot how, being dead,

His molten gold should glut my throat in hell.

Might question of me whom I snared last night,

Make inquisition of his face, his gait, His speech, his likeness. Well, be answered, then:

By God, I know not; but God knows I

The spy most dangerous on my secret walks.

And witness of my ways most worth my fear,

And deadliest listener to devour my speech,

Now questions me of danger, and the tongue

Most like to sting my trust and life to death

Now taxes mine of rashness. Ballard. Is he mad?

Or are ye brain-sick all with heat of wine.

That stand and hear him rage like men in storms

Made drunk with danger? Have ye sworn with him

To die the fool's death too of furious

And passion scared to slaughter of

Is there none here that knows his cause or me,

Nor what should save or spoil us? Tichborne. Friend, give ear: For God's sake, yet be counselled.

counsels? Nav.

Babington. Ay, for God's! What part hath God in this man's

Take you part with him; nay, in God's name go;

What should you do to bide with me! Turn back:

There stands your captain.

Savage. Hath not one man here One spark in spirit or sprinkling left

of shame? I that looked once for no such fellow

ship,

But soldiers' hearts in shapes of gen tlemen,

I am sick with shame to hear men's jangling tongues

Outnoise their swords unbloodied. Hear me, sirs;

My hand keeps time before my tongue, and hath

But wit to speak in iron; yet as now Such wit were sharp enough to serve

That keenest tongues may serve not.

One thing sworn Calls on our hearts: the queen must

singly die. Or we, half dead men now with daily-

ing, must Die several deaths for her brief one, and stretched

Beyond the scope of sufferance; wherefore here

Choose out the man to put this peril on, And gird him with this glory; let him

Straight hence to court, and through all stays of state

Strike death into her heart.

Babington. Why, this rings right; Well said, and soldierlike; do thus, and take

The vanguard of us all for honor.

Savage. Ay,

Well would I go, but seeing no courtly suit

Like yours, her servants and her pensioners.

The doorkeepers will bid my baseness back

From passage to her presence. Babington. Oh! for that,

Take this, and buy: nay, start not from your word;

You shall not.

Savage. Sir, I shall not.

Babington. Here's more gold;

Make haste, and God go with you. If the plot

Be blown on once of men's suspicious breath,

We are dead, and all die bootless deaths—be swift—

And her we have served we shall but surely slay.

I will make trial again of Walsingham
If he misdoubt us. Oh! my cloak and
sword — | Knocking within.
I will go forth myself. What noise is

will go forth myself. What noise that?

Catanan

Get you to Gage's lodging; stay not here;

Make speed without for Westminster;

There may we safely shift our shapes and fly,

If the end be come upon us.

Ballard. It is here.

Death knocks at door already. Fly!
farewell.

Babington. I would not leave you,

but they know you not:
You need not fear, being found here

singly.

Ballard. No.

Babington. Nay, halt not, sirs; no word but haste; this way,

Ere they break down the doors. God speed us well!

[Exeunt all but BALLARD. As they go out enter an Officer with Soldiers.

Officer. Here's one fox yet by the

foot: lay hold on him.

Ballard. What would you, sirs?

Officer. Why, make one foul bird fast,
Though the full flight be scattered; for

their kind Must prey not here again, nor here

put on
The jay's loose feathers for the raven

priest's

To mock the blear-eved marksman:

these plucked off
Shall show the nest that sent this

fledgling forth,

Hatched in the hottest holy nook of hell.

Ballard. I am a soldier.

Officer. Ay, the badge we know
Whose broidery signs the shoulders of
the file

That Satan marks for Jesus. Bind him

fast:
Blue satin and slashed velvet and gold lace.

Methinks we have you, and the hat's

So seemly set with silver buttons, all

As here was down in order. By ray faith,

A goodly ghostly friend to shrive a maid

As ever kissed for penance, pity 'tis The hangman's hands must hallow him again

When this lay slough slips off, and twist one rope

For priest to swing with soldier. Bring him hence. [Exeunt.

## SCENE II. - CHARTLEY.

MARY STUART and MARY BEATON.

Mary Stuart. We shall not need keep house for fear to-day:

The skies are fair and hot; the wind sits well

For hound and horn to chime with. I will go.

Mary Beaton How far from this to Tixall?

Mary Stuart. Nine or ten,

Or what miles more, I care not: we shall find

Fair field and goodly quarry, or he lies,

The gospeller that bade us to the sport Protesting yesternight the shire had none

To shame Sir Walter Aston's. God be praised,

I take such pleasure yet to back my steed

And bear my crossbow for a deer's death well.

I am almost half content - and yet I

To ride no harder nor more dangerous heat,

And hunt no beast of game less gallant

Mary Beaton. Nay,

You grew long since more patient. Mary Stuart. Ah, God help!

What should I do but learn the word of him

These years and years, the last word learnt but one,

That ever I loved least of all sad words?

The last is death for any soul to learn,
The last save death is patience.

Mary Beaton. Time enough

We have had ere death of life to learn it in

Since ou rode last on wilder ways than theirs

That drive the dun deer to his death.

Mary Stuart. Eighteen — How many more years yet shall God mete out

For thee and me to wait upon their will,

And hope or hope not, watch or sleep, and dream

Awake or sleeping? Surely fewer, I

Than half these years that all have less of life

Than one of those more fleet that flew before.

I am yet some ten years younger than this queen, Some nine or ten; but if I die this

year,
And she some score years longer than
I think

Be royal-titled, in one year of mine
I shall have lived the longer life, and
die

The fuller-fortuned woman. Dost thou mind

The letter that I writ nigh two years gone

To let her wit what privacies of hers
Our trusty dame of Shrewsbury's
tongue made mine

Ere it took fire to sting her lord and me?

How thick soe'er o'erscurfed with poisonous lies,

Of her I am sure it lied not; and perchance

I did the wiselier, having writ my fill,

Yet to withhold the letter when she sought

Of me to know what villanies had it poured

In ears of mine against her innocent

In ears of mine against her innocent name:

And yet thou knowest what mirthful heart was mine

To write her word of these, that, had she read,

Had surely, being but woman, made her mad,

Or haply, being not woman, had not 'Faith,

How say'st thou? did I well?

Mary Beaton. Ay, surely well

To keep that back you did not ill to write.

Mary Stuart. I think so, and agair I think not; yet

The best I did was bid thee burn it She,

That other Bess I mean of Hardwick, hath Mixed with her gall the fire at heart

of hell,

And all the mortal medicines of the

world,
To drug her speech with poison; and

God wot Her daughter's child here that I bred

and loved, Bess Pierpoint, my sweet bedfellow

that was, Keeps too much savor of her grandam's stock

For me to match with Nau: my secre-

Shall with no slip of hers ingraft his own,

Begetting shame or peril to us all From her false blood and fiery tongue.

Except
I find a mate as meet to match with

For truth to me as Gilbert Curle hath found,

I will play Tudor once, and break the banns,

Put on the feature of Elizabeth

To frown their hands in sunder.

Mary Beaton. Were it not
Some tyranny to take her likeness on

And bitter-hearted grudge of matrimony

For one and not his brother secretary, Forbid your Frenchman's banns for jealousy,

And grace your English with such liberal love

As Barbara fails not yet to find of you Since she writ Curle for Mowbray?

And herein

There shows no touch of Tudor in your mood

More than its wont is; which indeed is naught;

The world, they say, for her should waste, ere man

Should get her virginal goodwill to wed.

Mary Stuart. I would not be so tempered of my blood,

So much mismade as she in spirit and flesh,

To be more fair of fortune. She should bate

Not me — albeit she hate me deadly —

Than thee or any woman. By my faith,

Fain would I know, what knowing not of her now

I muse upon and marvel, — if she have Desire or pulse or passion of true heart Fed full from natural veins, or be indeed

All bare and barren all as dead men's bones

Of all sweet nature and sharp seed of love.

love, And those salt springs of life, through

fire and tears

That bring forth pain and pleasure in their kind

To make good days and evil, all in her Lie sere and sapless as the dust of death.

I have found no great good hap in all my days,

Nor much good cause to make me glad of God:

Yet have I had and lacked not of my

My good things and mine evil, being not yet

Barred from life's natural ends of evil

Foredoomed for man and woman through the world Till all their works be nothing: and of

Till all their works be nothing; and of mine

I know but this — though I should die to-day,

I would not take for mine her fortune.

Mary Beaton. No?

Myself perchance I would not.

Mary Stuart. Dost thou think

That fire-tongued witch of Shrewsbury spake once truth,

Who told me all those quaint, foul, merry tales

Of our dear sister, that at her desire I writ to give her word of, and at thine

Withheld, and put the letter in thine hand

To burn, as was thy counsel? For my part,

How loud she lied soever in the charge That for adultery taxed me with her lord,

And, being disproved before the council here,

Brought on their knees to give themselves the lie

Her and her sons by that first lord of four

That took in turn this hell-mouthed hag to wife,

And got her kind upon her, — yet in this

I do believe she lied not more than I Reporting her by record, how she said What infinite times had Leicester and his queen

Plucked all the fruitless fruit of baffled love

That being contracted privily they might;

With what large gust of fierce and foiled desire

This votaress crowned, whose vow could no man break,

Since God, whose hand shuts up the unkindly womb.

Had sealed it on her body, man by

Would course her kindless lovers, and in quest

Pursue them hungering as a hound in heat.

Full on the fiery scent and slot of lust, That men took shame and laughed and marvelled: one,

Her chamberlain, so hot would she

And turn perforce from cover, that himself,

Being tracked at sight thus in the general eve.

Was even constrained to play the piteous hare.

And wind and double till her amorous

Were blind with speed and breathless;

but the worst Was this, that for this country's sake and shame's

Our huntress Dian could not be content With Hatton, and another born her

And subject of this kingdom, but to

The heavier scandal on her countrymen Had cast the wild growth of her lust away

On one base-born, a stranger, whom of nights

Within her woman's chamber would she seek

To kiss and play for shame with secretly:

And with the duke her bridegroom that should be, —

That should and could not, seeing forsooth no man

Might make her wife or woman, - had she dealt

as with this knave his follower; for by night

She met him coming at her chamber door

In her bare smock and night-rail, and thereon

Bade him come in; who there abode three hours.

But fools were they that thought to bind her will,

And stay with one man, or allay the mood

eral heats

To hunt fresh trails of lusty love. Ah this.

Thou knowest, on record truly was set down, With much more villanous else: she

prayed me write

That she might know the natural spirit and mind

Toward her of this fell witch whose rancorous mouth

Then bayed my name, as now being great with child

By her fourth husband, in whose charge I lay

As here in Paulet's; so being moved I wrote,

And yet I would she had read it, though not now

Would I re-write each word again, albeit

I might, or thou, were I so minded, or Thyself so moved to bear such witness. But

'Tis well we know not how she had borne to read

All this and more; what counsel gave the dame,

With loud excess of laughter urging

To enter on those lists of love-making My son for suitor to her, who thereby Might greatly serve and stead me in her sight;

And, I replying that such a thing could

But held a very mockery, she returns, The queen was so infatuate and distraught

With high conceit of her fair fretted face

As of a heavenly goddess, that her

Would take it on her head with no great pains

To bring her to believe it easily;

Being so past reason fain of flattering tongues,

She though, they mocked her not not lied who said

They might not sometimes look her full in face

That ranging still gave tongue on sev- 1 ir the light glittering from it as the

And so perforce must all her women say,

And she herself that spake, who durst

For fear to laugh out each in other's

Even while they fooled, and fed her vein with words,

Nor let their eyes cross when they spake to her,

And set their feature fast in a frame To keep grave countenance with gross

mockery lined;
And how she prayed me chide her
daughter, whom

She might by no means move to take this way,

And for her daughter Talbot was assured

She could not ever choose but laugh outright

Even in the good queen's flattered face.

God wot,
Had she read all, and in my hand set
down,

I could not blame her though she had sought to take

My head for payment: no less poise on earth

Had served, and hardly, for the writer's fee;

I could not much have blamed her; all the less.

That I did take this, though from slanderous lips,

For gospel and not slander, and that now

I yet do well believe it.

Mary Beaton. And herself

Had well believed so much, and surely seen, —

For all your protest of discredit made
With God to witness that you could
not take

Such tales for truth of her, nor would not, -yet

You meant not she should take your word for this,

As well I think she would not.

Mary Stuart. Haply, no. We do protest not thus to be

We do protest not thus to be believed.

And yet the witch in one thing seven
years since

Belied her, saying she then must needs die soon

For timeless fault of nature. Now belike

The soothsaying that speaks short her span to be

May prove more true of presage.

Mary Beaton. Have you hope

The chase to-day may serve our further ends Than to renew your spirit, and bid

time speed?

Mary Stuart. I see not, but I may

the hour is full

Which I was bidden expect of them to bear

More fruit than grows of promise.

Babington

Should tarry now not long; from France our friends

Lift up their heads to us-ward, and await

What comfort may confirm them from our part Who sent us comfort; Ballard's secret

tongue

Has kindled England, striking from

men's hearts

As from a flint the fire that slept, and

made
Their dark dumb thoughts and dim

disfigured hopes
Take form from his and feature, aim

and strength,

Speech and desire toward action; all

the shires Wherein the force lies hidden of our

faith
Are stirred and set on edge of preser\*

deed
And hope more imminent now of help

And work to do than ever; not this

time
We hang on trust in succor that comes
short

By Philip's fault from Austrian John, whose death

Put widow's weeds on mine unwedded hope,

Late trothplight to his enterprise in value. That was to set me free, but might not

The faith it pledged, nor on the hand of hope

Make fast the ring that weds desire

with deed

And promise with performance; Parma stands

More fast now for us in his uncle's stead,

Albeit the lesser warrior, yet in place More like to avail us, and in happier time

To do like service; for my cousin of Guise,

His hand and league hold fast our kinsman king,

lf not to bend and shape him for our

use,

Yet so to govern as he may not thwart Our forward undertaking till its force Discharge itself on England: from no side

I see the shade of any fear to fail

As those before so baffled; heart and hand

Our hope is armed with trust more strong than steel,

And spirit to strike more helpful than a sword

In hands that lack the spirit; and here to-day

It may be I shall look this hope in the eyes,

And see her face transfigured. God is good:

He will not fail his faith forever. Oh That I were now in saddle! Yet an hour,

And I shall be as young again as

Whose life was come to August; like this year,

I had grown past midway of my life, and sat

Heartsick of summer; but new-mounted now

I shall ride right through shine and shade of spring With heart and habit of a bride, and

bear A brow more bright than fortune.

Truth it is,
I' ose words of bride and May should on my tongue

Sound now not merry, ring no joy-bells out In ears of hope or memory; not for

me Have they been joyous words; but this

fair day

All sounds that ring delight in fortunate ears,

And words that make men thankful even to me

Seem thankworthy for joy they have given me not

And hope which now they should not.

Mary Beaton. Nay, who knows?

The less they have given of joy, the

more they may;
And they who have had their happiness

And they who have had their happiness before

Have hope not in the future; time o'er-

past
And time to be have several ends, nor
wear

One forward face and backward.

Mary Stuart. God, I pray,

Turn thy good words to gospel, and make truth

Of their kind presage! but our Scotswomen

Would say, to be so joyous as I am, Though I had cause, as surely cause I

Were no good warrant of good hope for me.

I never took such comfort of my trust In Norfolk or Northumberland, nor looked

For such good end as now of all my fears

From all devices past of policy

To join my name with my misnatured son's

In handfast pledge with England's, ere my foes

His counsellors had flawed his craven faith,

And moved my natural blood to cast me off

Who bore him in my body, to come forth

Less childlike than a changeling. Bun not long

Sha'l they find means by him to work their will,

Nor he bear head against me; hope was his

To reign forsooth without my fellowship,

And he that with me would not shall

And he that with me would not shall not now

Without or with me wield not or divide Or part or all of empire.

Mary Beaton. Dear my queen, Vex not your mood with sudden change of thoughts;

Your mind but now was merrier than the sun

Half rid by this through morning: we by noon

Should blithely mount and meet him. Mary Stuart. So I said.

My spirit is fallen again from that glad strength

Which even but now arrayed it; yet what cause

Should dull the dancing measure in my blood

For doubt or wrath, I know not. Being once forth,

My heart again will quicken.

Sings.

And ye maun braid your yellow hair, And busk ye like a bride;

Wi' sevenscore men to bring ye hame, And ae true love beside;

Between the birk and the green rowan Fu' blithely shall ye ride.

O ye maun braid my yellow hair, But braid it like nae bride; And I maun gang my ways, mither, Wi' nae true love beside; Between the kirk and the kirkyard Fu' sadly shall I ride.

How long since, Illow long since was it last I heard or

sang
Such light lost ends of old faint rhyme
worn thin

With use of country songsters? When we twain

Were maidens but some twice a span's length high,

length high,
Thou hadst the happier memory to hold rhyme,

But not for songs the merrier.

Mary Beaton. This was one

That I would sing after my nurse, I think,

And weep upon in France at six years old

To think of Scotland.

Mary Stuart. Would I weep for that,

Woman or child, I have had now years enough

To weep in; thou wast never French in heart,

Serving the queen of France. Poor queen that was,

Poor boy that played her bridegroom! now they seem

In these mine eyes that were her eyes as far

Beyond the reach and range of oldworld time

As their first fathers' graves.

Enter SIR AMYAS PAULET.

Parallet Madam if now.

Paulet. Madam, if now
It please you to set forth, the hour is
full,

And there your horses ready.

Mary Stuart. Sir, my thanks.

We are bounden to you and this goodly

day
For no small comfort. Is it your will

we ride Accompanied with any for the nonce

Of our own household?

Paulet. If you will, to-day

Your secretaries have leave to ride with you.

Mary Stuart. We keep some state, then, yet. I pray you, sir,

Doth he wait on you that came here last month,

N low built, lank-cheeked, Judasbearded man,

Lean, supple, grave, pock-pitten, yellowpolled,

A smiling fellow with a downcast eye?

Paulet. Madam, I know the man for none of mine.

Mary Stuart. I give you joy as you should give God thanks,

Sir, if I err not; but meseemed this man

Found gracious entertainment here, and

Such counsel with you as I surely thought

Spalee him your friend, and honorable.
But now,

If I misread not an ambiguous word,
It seems you know no more of him or
less

Than Peter did, being questioned, of his Lord.

Paulet. I know not where the cause were to be sought

That might for likeness or unlikeness found

Make seemly way for such comparison

As turns such names to jest and bitterness:

Howbeit, as I denied not nor disclaimed To know the man you speak of, yet I may

With very purity of truth profess The man to be not of my following.

Mary Stuart. See

How lightly may the tongue that thinks no ill Or trip or slip, discoursing that or

this With grave good men in purity and

truth,
And come to shame even with a word!

God wot,
We had need put bit and bridle in our

lips
Ere they take on them of their foolish-

To change wise words with wisdom. — Come, sweet friend,

Let us go seek our kind with horse and hound

To keep us witless company; belike, There shall we find our fellows.

[Exeunt Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton.

Paulet. Would to God

This day had done its office! mine till then

Holds me the verier prisoner.

Enter PHILLIPPS.

Phillipps. She will go?

Paulet. Gladly, poor sinful fool, — more gladly, sir,

Than I go with her.

Phillipps. Yet you go not far:

She is come too near her end of way faring

To tire much more men's feet that follow.

Paulet. Ay.

She walks but half blind yet to the end. Even now

She spake of you, and questioned doubtfully

What here you came to do, or held what place

Or commerce with me: when you caught her eye,

It seems your courtesy by some graceless chance

Found but scant grace with her. *Phillipps*. 'Tis mine own blame,

Or fault of mine own feature; yet forsooth

I greatly covet not their gracious hap Who have found or find most grace with her. I pray,

Doth Wade go with you?

Paulet. Nay, — what! know you not? —

But with Sir Thomas Gorges, from the court,
To drive this deer at Tixall.

Phillipps. Two years since,

He went, I think, commissioned from the queen
To treat with her at Sheffield?

To treat with her at Sheffield? Paulet. Ay, and since

She hath not seen him; who being known of here

Had haply given her swift suspicion edge,

Or cause at least of wonder. *Phillipps*. And I doubt

His last year's entertainment oversea
As our queen's envoy to demand of
France

Her traitor Morgan's body, whence he brought

brought Naught save dry blows back from the

Duke d'Aumale,
And for that prisoner's quarters here
to hang

His own not whole but beaten, should not much

Incline him to more good regard of her For whose love's sake her friends have dealt with him So honorably; nor she that knows of For loyalty disloyal, or approved

Be the less like to take his presence here

For no good presage to her: you have both done well

To keep his hand as close herein as

Paulet. Sir, by my faith I know not, for myself,

What part is for mine honor, or where-

Of all this action laid upon mine hand The name and witness of a gentleman May gain desert or credit, and increase In seed and harvest of good men's

For heritage to his heirs, that men unborn

Whose fame is as their name derived from his

May reap in reputation; and indeed I look for none advancement in the

Further than this that yet for no man's sa'te

Would I forego, to keep the name I

And honor, which no son of mine shall

I have left him not for any deed of mine As perfect as my sire bequeathed it me:

I say, for any word or work yet past No tongue can thus far tax me of de-

From that fair forthright way of gentle-

Nor shall for any that I think to do Or aught I think to say alive: howbeit, I were much bounden to the man would

But so much for me in our mistress' ear, The treasurer's, or your master Walsingham's.

Whose office here I have undergone thus long,

And had I leave more gladly would put off

Than ever I put on me; being not one That out of love toward England even or God

At mightiest men's desire would lightly be

In trustless works a trusty traitor; this He that should tell them of me, to pro-

The speedier end here of this work imposed,

Should bind me to him more heartily than thanks

Might answer.

Phillips. Good Sir Amyas, you and I Hold no such office in this dangerous

As men make love to for their own name's sake

Or personal lust of honor; but herein I pray you yet take note, and pardon

If I for the instance mix your name with

That no man's private honor lies at

Nor is the stake set here to play for Than what is more than all men's

names alive. -The great life's gage of England; in

whose name Lie all our own impledged, as all our

For her redemption forfeit, if the cause

Call once upon us. Not this gift or Or what best likes us, or were gladliest

given, Or might most honorably be parted

with For our more credit on her best be-

Doth she we serve, this land that made

us men, Require of all her children; but demands

Of our great duty toward her full deserts, Even all we have of honor or of life,

Of breath or fame, to give her were I,

Or what were you, being mean or nobly born.

Yet moulded both of one land's natural

And fashioned out of England, to deny What gift she crave soever, choose and grudge

What grace we list to give or what withhold.

Refuse and reckon with her when she bids

Yield up, forsooth, not life but fame to come.

A good man's praise or gentleman's repute,

Or lineal pride of children, and the light

Of loyalty remembered? which of these Were worth our mother's death, or shame that might

Fall for one hour on England? She must live.

And keep in all men's sight her honor fast.

Though all we die dishonored; and myself

Know not nor seek of men's report to

If what I do to serve her till I die Be honorable or shameful, and its end Good in men's eyes or evil; but for

God. I find not why the name or fear of him

Herein should make me swerve or start aside

Through faint heart's falsehood, as a broken bow

Snapped in his hand that bent it, ere the shaft

Find out his enemies' heart, and I that

Whereto I am sped for service even of him

Who put this office on us. Paulet. Truly, sir,

I lack the wordy wit to match with yours,

Who speak no more than soldier; this I know. -

I am sick in spirit and heart to have in

Such work or such device of yours as

For fear and conscience of what worst

may come I dare not well bear through.

Phillipps. Why, so last month boot.

I had set you down a course for many things

You durst not put in execution, nor

Consign the packet to this lady's hand That was returned from mine, seeing all was well,

And you should hold yourself most wretched man

If by your mean or order there should spring

Suspicion 'twixt the several messengers Whose hands unwitting each of other

The same close trade for the same golden end,

While either holds his mate a faithful

And all their souls, base-born or gently bred,

Are coined and stamped and minted for our use

And current in our service: I thereon. To assuage your doubt and fortify your

Was posted hither, where by craft and pains

The web is wound up of our enterprise, And in our hands we hold her very

heart As fast as all this while we held impawned

The faith of Barnes that stood for Gifford here

To take what letters for his mistress

From southward through the ambassador of France,

And bear them to the brewer, your honest man,

Who wist no further of his fellowship Than he of Gifford's, being as simple knaves

As knavish each in his simplicity, And either serviceable alike, to shift

Between my master's hands and yours and mine

Her letters writ and answered to and fro:

And all these faiths as weather-tight and safe.

You writ my master word, and me to As was the box that held those letters close

At bottom of the barrel, to give up
The charge there sealed and ciphered,
and receive

A charge as great in peril and in price To yield again, when they drew off the

That weekly served this lady's household whom

We have drained as dry of secrets drugged with death

As ever they this vessel, and return
To her own lips the dregs she brewed
or we

For her to drink have tempered. What

Should seem so strange now to you, or

So much the daintier palate of your thoughts,

That I should need reiterate you by

The work of us o'erpast, or fill your

With long foregone recital, that at last Your soul may start not, or your sense recoil,

To know what end we are come to, or what hope

We took in hand to cut this peril off By what close mean soe'er and what foul hands

Unwashed of treason, which it yet mis-

Your knightly palm to touch or close with, seeing

The grime of gold is baser than of blood

That barks their filthy fingers? yet with these

Must you cross hands and grapple, or let fall

The trust you took to treasure.

Paulet. Sir, I will,

Even till the queen take back that gave it; yet

Will not join hands with these, nor take on mine

The taint of their contagion; knowing no cause

That should confound or couple my good name

With theirs more hateful than the reek of hell.

You had these knaveries and these knaves in charge,

Not I that knew not how to handle them,

Nor whom to choose for chief of treasons, him

That in mine ignorant eye, unused to read

The shameful scripture of such faces, bare

Graved on his smooth and simple cheek and brow

No token of a traitor; yet this boy, This milk-mouthed weanling with his

maiden chin,
This soft-lipped knave, late suckled as

on blood And nursed of poisonous nipples, have

you not
Found false or feared by this, whom

first you found A trustier thief and worthier of his

wage Than I, poor man, had wit to find

him? I, That trust no changelings of the church

of hell,

No babes reared priestlike at the paps
of Rome,

Who have left the old harlot's deadly dugs drawn dry,

I lacked the craft to rate this knave of price,

Your smock-faced Gifford, at his worth aright,

Which now comes short of promise. *Phillipps*. Oh, not he!

Let not your knighthood for a slippery word

So much misdoubt his knaveship: here from France,

On hint of our suspicion in his ear Half-jestingly recorded, that his hand Were set against us in one politic track

With his old yokefellows in craft and creed,

Betraying not them to us but ourselves to them,

My Gilbert writes me with such heat of hand,

Such pitcous protestation of his faith, So stuffed and swoln with burly-bellied oaths,— And God and Christ confound him if he lie,

And Jesus save him as he speaks mere truth, —

My gracious godly priestling, that your-

Must sure be moved to take his truth on trust,

Or stand for him approved an atheist. Paulet. Well,

That you find stuff of laughter in such

And mirth to make out of the godless mouth

Of such a twice-turned villain, for my part,

I take in token of your certain trust, And make therewith mine own assur-

ance sure,

To see betimes an end of all such craft

As takes the faith forsworn of loudtongued liars, And blasphemies of brothel-breathing

knaves, To build its hope or break its jest

upon;
And so commend you to your charge,

and take

Mine own on me less gladly; for by this

She should be girt to ride, as the old

saw saith, Out of God's blessing into the warm

And out of the warm sun into the pit That men have dug before her, as her-

self
Had dug for England else a deeper

To hide our hope forever: yet I would This day and all that hang on it were done. [Exeunt.

Scene III. — Before Tixall Park.

MARY STUART, MARY BEATON, PAU-LET, CURLE, NAU, and Attendants. Mary Stuart. If I should nevermore

back steed alive,

But now had ridden hither this fair day
The last road ever I must ride on
earth,

Yet would I praise it, saying of all days gone And all roads ridden in sight of stars

and sun

Since first I sprang to saddle, here at last

I had found no joyless end. These ways are smooth,

And all this land's face merry; yet I find

The ways even therefore not so good to ride,

And all the land's face therefore less

worth love, Being smoother for a palfrey's ma'den

pace
And merrier than our moors for out-

And merrier than our moors for out-

I lie to say so; there the wind and sun Make madder mirth by midsummer, and fill

With broader breadth and lustier length of light

The heartier hours that clothe for even and dawn

Our bosom-belted billowy-blossoming hills

Whose hearts break out in laughter like the sea For miles of heaving heather. Ye

should mock

My banished praise of Scotland; and

in faith
I praised it but to prick you en to

praise
Of your own goodly land; though field
and wood

Be parked and parcelled to the sky's edge out,

And this green Stafford moorland smooth and strait

That we but now rode over, and by ours

Look pale for lack of large live moun tain bloom

Wind-buffeted with morning, it should

Worth praise of men whose lineal honor lives

In keeping here of history. But me

I have heard, Sir Amyas, of your lib eral west As of a land more affluent-souled than this,

And fruitful-hearted as the south-wind:

I find a fair-faced change of temperate clime

From that bald hill-brow in a broad bare plain

Where winter laid us both his prisoners late

Fast by the feet at Tutbury; but men say

Your birthright in this land is fallen more fair

In goodlier ground of heritage: perchance,

Grief to be now barred thence by mean of me,

Who less than you can help it or myself,

Makes you ride sad and sullen.

Paulet. Madam, no:

I pray you lay not to my wilful charge The blame or burden of discourtesy

That but the time should bear which

lays on me

This weight of thoughts untimely.

Mary Stuart. Nay, fair sir,

If I, that have no cause in life to seem Glad of my sad life more than prisoners may,

Take comfort yet of sunshine, he methinks

That holds in ward my days and nights might well

Take no less pleasure of this broad blithe air

Than his poor charge that too much troubles him.

What! are we nigh the chase? Paulet. Even hard at hand.

Mary Stuart. Can I not see between the glittering leaves

Gleam the dun hides and flash the startled horns

That we must charge and scatter? Were I queen,

And had a crown to wager on my hand, Sir, I would set it on the chance today

To shoot a flight beyond you.

Paulet. Verily,

The hazard were too heavy for my skill:

I would not hold your wager.

Mary Stuart. No! and why?

Paulet. For fear to come a bowshot short of you

On the left hand, unluckily. Mary Stuart. My friend,

Our keeper's wit-shaft is too keen for ours

To match its edge with pointless iron. Sir,

Your tongue shoots farther than my hand or eye

With sense or aim can follow. — Gilbert Curle,

Your heart yet halts behind this cry of hounds,

Hunting your own deer's trail at home,
who lies

Now close in covert till her bearingtime

Be full to bring forth kindly fruit of kind

To love that yet lacks issue; and in sooth

I blame you not to bid all sport go by

For one white doe's sake travailing,
who myself

Think long till I may take within mine arm
The soft fawn suckling that is yeaned

not yet, But is to make her mother. We must hold

A goodly christening feast with prisoner's cheer

And mirth enow for such a tender thing As will not weep more to be born in bonds

Than babes born out of gaoler's ward, nor grudge

To find no friend more fortunate than I Nor happier hand to welcome it, nor name

More prosperous than poor mine towear, if God

wear, if God Shall send the new-made mother's

breast, for love
Of us that love his mother's maidenhood,

A maid to be my name-child, and in

Save love to them that love her, by God's grace,

Most unlike me; for whose unborn sweet sake

Pray you meantime be merry. - 'Faith, methinks Here be more huntsmen out afield to-

And merrier than my guardian. Sir,

look up: What think you of these riders? - All

my friends, Make on to meet them.

Paulet. There shall need no haste: They ride not slack or lamely.

Mary Stuart. Now, fair sir,

What say you to my chance on wager? Here

I think to outshoot your archery. - By my life.

That too must fail if hope now fail me; these

That ride so far off yet, being come, shall bring

Death or deliverance. Prithee, speak but once;

Aside to MARY BEATON. Say, these are they we looked for; say, thou too

Hadst hope to meet them; say, they should be here,

And I did well to look for them; O God!

Say but I was not mad to hope; see there;

Speak, or I die.

Mary Beaton. Nay, not before they

Mary Stuart. Dost thou not hear my heart? It speaks so loud, I can hear nothing of them. Yet I

will not

Fail in mine enemy's sight. This is mine hour

That was to be for triumph; God, I pray, Stretch not its length out longer!

Mary Beaton. It is past. Enter SIR THOMAS GORGES, SIR WIL-LIAM WADE, and Soldiers.

Mary Stuart. What man is this that stands across our way?

Gorges. One that hath warrant, madam, from the queen

secretary,

And for more surety see yourself re moved

To present ward at Tixall here hard by. As in this paper stands of her subscribed. -

Lay hands on them.

Mary Stuart. Was this your riddle's To PAULET.

You have shot beyond me indeed, and shot to death

Your honor with my life. — Draw, sirs, and stand:

Ye have swords yet left to strike with once, and die

By these our foes are girt with. Some good friend, —

I should have one yet left of you, take heart,

And slay me here. For God's love, draw: they have not

So large a vantage of us, we must needs Bear back one foot from peril. Give not way:

Ye shall but die more shamefully than here,

Who can but here die fighting. What! no man?

Must I find never at my need alive A man with heart to help me? O my

Let me die now, and foil them! -Paulet, you,

Most knightly liar and traitor, was not this

Part of your charge, to play my hangman too.

Who have played so well my doomsman, and betrayed

So honorably my trust, so bravely set A snare so loyal to make sure for death So poor a foolish woman? Sir, or you That have this gallant office, great as

To do the deadliest errand and most

That even your mistress ever laid on

And sent her basest knave to bear and

You are likewise of her chivalry, and should not

Yo arrest your French and English Shrink to fulfil your title; being a knight,

For her dear sake that made you, lose not heart

To strike for her one worthy stroke, that may

Rid me defenceless of the loathed long life

She gapes for like a bloodhound. Nay, I find

A face beside you that should bear for me

Not life inscribed upon it; two years since

I read therein at Sheffield what good will She bare toward me that sent to treat withal

So mean a man and shameless, by his

tongue To smite mine honor on the face, and

My name of queen to servant; by his

So let her turn my life's name now to death,

Which I would take more thankfully than shame

To plead and thus prevail not. Paulet. Madam, no:

With us you may not in such suit pre-

Nor we by words or wrath of yours be moved

To turn their edge back on you, nor remit

remit
The least part of our office, which deserves

Nor scorn of you nor wonder, whose own act

Has laid it on us; wherefore with less rage

Please you take thought now to submit yourself,

Even for your own more honor, to the effect

Whose cause was of your own device, that here

Bears fruit unlooked for; which being ripe in time

You cannot choose but taste of, nor may we
But do the season's bidding, and the

who weeps at heart to know it. — Dis-

Take you the prisoners to your present ward,

And hence again to London: here meanwhile

Some week or twain their lady must lie close,

And with a patient or impatient heart

Expect an end and word of judgment: I Must with Sir William back to Chart ley straight,

And there make inquisition ere day close

What secret serpents of what treasons hatched

May in this lady's papers lurk, whence we

Must pluck the fangs forth of them yet unfleshed,

And lay these plots like dead and strangled snakes

Naked before the council.

Mary Stuart. I must go?
Gorges. Madam, no help: I pray your
pardon.

Mary Stuart. Ay?

Had I your pardon in this hand to give, And here in this my vengeance— Words, and words!

God, for thy pity! what vile thing is this That thou didst make of woman? even in death,

As in the extremest evil of all our lives.

We can but curse or pray, but prate and weep,

And all our wrath is wind that works no wreck,

And all our fire as water. — Noble sirs, We are servants of your servants, and obey

The beck of your least groom; obsequiously,

We pray you but report of us so much, Submit us to you. Yet would I take farewell,

May it not displease you, for old service' sake,

Of one my servant here that was, and now

Hath no word for me; yet I blame him

Who am past all help of man. — Gor witness me,

I would not chide now, Gilbert, though my tongue

Had strength yet left for chiding, and its edge

Were yet a sword to smite with, or my wrath

A thing that babes might shrink at; only this

Take with you for your poor queen's true last word, —

That if they let me live so long to see The fair wife's face again from whose soft side,

Now laboring with your child, by violent hands

You are reft perforce for my sake, while

I will have charge of her more carefully Than of mine own life's keeping, which indeed

I think not long to keep, nor care, God knows,

How soon or how men take it. Nay, good friend,

Weep not: my weeping time is wellnigh past,

And theirs whose eyes have too much wept for me

Should last no longer. — Sirs, I give you thanks
For thus much grace and patience shown

of you,

My gentle gaolers, towards a queen

unqueened,
Who shall nor get nor crave again of

man What grace may rest in him to give her.

Come, Bring me to bonds again, and her with

That hath not stood so nigh me all these years

To fall ere life doth from my side, or

Her way to death without me till I die.

ACT II. - WALSINGHAM.

Scene I. - Windsor Castle.

QUEEN ELIZABETH and SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.

Elizabeth. What will ye make me?

Let the council know

I am yet their loving mistress, but they lay

Too strange a burden on my love who send

As to their servant word what ways to

take,
What sentence of my subjects given

subscribe, And in mine own name utter. Bid

them wait:
Have I not patience? and was never

quick To teach my tongue the deadly word of death,

Lest one day strange tongues blot my fame with blood:

The red addition of my sister's name Shall brand not mine.

Walsingham. God grant your mercy shown

Mark not your memory like a martyr's red

With pure imperial heart's-blood of your own

Shed through your own sweet-spirited height of heart

That held your hand from justice!

Elizabeth. I would rather
Stand in God's sight so signed with

mine own blood
Than with a sister's — innocent; or

indeed
Though guilty—being a sister's—

might I choose, As being a queen I may not surely,—

I may not choose, you tell me. Walsingham. Nay, no man

Hath license of so large election given
As once to choose, being servant called
of God,

If he will serve or no, or save the

And slack the service.

Elizabeth. Yea, but in his Word

I find no word that whets for kingkilling

The sword kings bear for justice: yet I doubt,
Being drawn, it may not choose but

strike at root —
Being drawn to cut off treason. Wal

ng drawn to cut on treason singham,

You are more a statesman than a gospeller;

Take for your tongue's text now no text of God's,

But what the Devil has put into their lips

Who should have slain me; nay, what by God's grace,

Who bared their purpose to us, through pain or fear

rath been wrung thence of secrets writ

At bottom of their hearts. Have they confessed?

Walsingham. The twain trapped first in London.

Elizabeth. What, the priest? Their twice-turned Ballard, ha? Walsingham. Madam, not he.

Elizabeth. God's blood! ye have spared not him the torment, knaves?

Of all I would not spare him. Walsingham. Verily, no;

The rack hath spun his life's thread out so fine

There is but left for death to slit in twain

The thickness of a spider's. Elizabeth. Ay, still dumb?

Walsingham. Dumb for all good the pains can get of him;

Had he drunk dry the chalice of his craft Brewed in design abhorred of even his friends

With poisonous purpose toward your majesty,

He had kept scarce harder silence.

Elizabeth. Poison? ay—

That should be still the churchman's household sword,
Or saintly staff to bruise crowned heads

from far,
And break them with his precious

balms that smell

Rank as the jaws of death, or festal

Rank as the jaws of death, or festal fume

When Rome yet recked with Borgia.
But the rest

Had grace enow to grant me for goodwill

Some death more gracious than a rat's?
God wot,

I am bounden to them, and will charge for this

The hangman thank them heartily; they shall not

Lack daylight means to die by. God, meseems,

Will have me not die darkling like a dog,

Who hath kept my lips from poison, and my heart

From shot of English knave or Spanish, both

Dubbed of the Devil or damned his doctors, whom

My riddance from all ills that plague man's life

Should have made great in record; and for wage

Your Ballard hath not better hap to fee Than Lopez had or Parry. Well, he lies

As dumb in bonds as those dead dogs in earth,

You say; but of his fellows newly ta'en There are that keep not silence: what say these?

Pour in mine ears the poison of their plot

Whose fangs have stung the silly snakes to death.

Walsingham. The first a soldier,

Savage, in these wars

That sometimes serving sought a traitor's luck

Under the prince Farnese, then of late At Rheims was tempted of our traitors there,

Of one in chief, Gifford the seminarist, My smock-faced spy's good uncle, to take off

Or the earl of Leicester or your gracious self;

And since his passage hither, to confirm

His hollow-hearted hardihood, hath

Word from this doctor more solicitous

Sent by my knave his nephew, who of late

Was in the seminary of so deadly seed Their reader in philosophy, that their head. Even Cardinal Allen, holds for just and good

The purpose laid upon his hand; this man

Makes yet more large confession than of this,

Saying from our Gilbert's trusty mouth he had

Assurance that in Italy the Pope

Hath levies raised against us, to set forth

For seeming succor toward the Parmesan,

But in their actual aim bent hither, where

With French and Spaniards in one front of war

They might make in upon us; but from France

No foot shall pass for inroad on our peace

Till—so they phrase it—by these
Catholics here

Your majesty be taken, or -

Elizabeth. No more —

But only taken? springed but bird-like?
Ha!

They are something tender of our poor personal chance —

Temperately tender: yet I doubt the springe

Had haply maimed me no less deep than life

Sits next the heart most mortal. Or

—so be it

I slip the springe—what yet may shackle France, Hang weights upon their purpose who

should else
Be great of heart against us? They

take time
Till I be taken — or till what signal else

As favorable?

Walsingham. Till she they serve be brought

Safe out of Paulet's keeping.

Elizabeth. Ay? they know him

So much my servant, and his guard so good,

That sound of strange feet marching on our soil

Against us in his prisoner's name perchance Might from the walls wherein she sits his guest

Raise a funereal echo? Yet I think
He would not dare — what think'st

thou might he dare

Without my word for warrant? If

knew This—

Walsingham. It should profit not your grace to know

What may not be conceivable for truth

Without some stain on honor. Elizabeth. Nay, I say not

That I would have him take upon his hand

More than his trust may warrant: yet have men,

Good men, for very truth of their good hearts,

Put loyal hand to work as perilous
Well.

God wot I would not have him so transgress —

If such be called transgressors. Walsingham. Let the queen

Rest well assured he shall not. So far forth Our swordsman Savage witnesses of

these That moved him toward your murder

but in trust
Thereby to bring invasion over sea:

Which one more gently natured of his birth,

Tichborne, protests with very show of truth

That he would give no ear to, knowing, he saith,

The miseries of such conquest: nor, it

seems,
Heard this man aught of murderous

Heard this man aught of murderous purpose bent

Against your highness.

Elizabeth. Naught? why then, again, To him I am yet more bounden, who may think,

Being found but half my traitor, at my hands

To find but half a hangman. Walsingham. Nay, the man

Herein seems all but half his own man, being Made merely out of stranger hearts and brains

Their engine of conspiracy; for thus Forsooth he pleads, that Babington his friend

First showed him how himself was wrought upon

By one man's counsel and persuasion, one

Held of great judgment, — Ballard, on whose head

All these lay all their forfeit. Elizabeth. Yet shall each

Pay for himself red coin of ransom down

In costlier drops than gold is. But of these

Why take we thought? Their naturalsubject blood

Can wash not out their sanguine-sealed attempt,

Nor leave us marked as tyrant: only

she That is the head and heart of all your

Whose hope or fear is England's, quick or dead.

Leaves or imperilled or impeached of

Me, that with all but hazard of mine own,

God knows, would yet redeem her. I

With mine own hand to her privily, — what else?—

Saying, if by word as privy from her hand
She will confess her treasonous prac-

tices,
They shall be wrapped in silence up,

and she
By judgment live unscathed.

Walsingham. Being that she is, So surely will she deem of your great

grace, And see it but as a snare set wide, or

And see it but as a snare set wide, or net

Spread in the bird's sight vainly. Elizabeth. Why, then, well:

She, casting off my grace, from all men's grace

Cuts off herself, and even aloud avows By silence and suspect of jealous heart Her manifest foul conscience: on which proof

I will proclaim her to the parliament

So self-convicted. Yet I would not have

Her name and life by mortal evidence Touched at the trial of them that now shall die,

Or by their charge attainted: lest my-

Fall in more peril of her friends than she

Stands yet in shot of judgment. Walsingham. Be assured,

Madam, the process of their treasons judged

Shall tax not her before her trial-time With public note of clear complicity Even for that danger's sake which

moves you. Elizabeth. Me

So much it moves not for my mere life's sake —

Which I would never buy with fear of death —

As for the general danger's, and the shame's

Thence cast on queenship and on womanhood

By mean of such a murderess. But, for them.

I would the merited manner of their death

Might for more note of terror be referred

To me and to my council: these at least

Shall hang for warning in the world's wide eye

More high than common traitors, with more pains

Being ravished forth of their more vil

Than feed the general throat of justice. Her

Shall this too touch, whom none that

serves henceforth But shall be sure of hire more terrible

Than all past wage of treason.

Walsingham. Why, so tar

As law gives leave —

Elizabeth. What prat'st thou me of law?

God's blood! is law for man's sake made, or man

For law's sake only, to be held in bonds.

Led lovingly like hound in huntsman's

Or child by finger, not for help or stay, But hurt and hinderance? Is not all this land

And all its hope and surety given to

Of sovereignty and freedom, all the fame

And all the fruit of manhood hence to

More than one rag or relic of its law Wherewith all these lie shackled? as too sure

Have states no less than ours been done to death

With gentle counsel and soft-handed rule

For fear to snap one thread of ordinance

Though thence the state were strangled. Walsingham. Madam, yet

There need no need be here of law's least breach.

That of all else is worst necessity -Being such a mortal medicine to the state

As poison drunk to expel a feverish taint

Which air or sleep might purge as easily.

Elizabeth. Ay; but if air be poisonstruck with plague,

Or sleep to death lie palsied, fools were they,

Faint hearts and faithless, who for health's fair sake Should fear to cleanse air, pierce and

probe the trance. With purging fire or iron. Have your

God send good end of all this, and procure Some mean whereby mine enemies'

craft and his May take no feet but theirs in their

own toils,

And no blood shed be innocent as mine.

SCENE II. - CHARTLEY.

MARY BEATON and SIR AMYAS PAULET.

Paulet. You should do well to bid her less be moved

Who needs fear less of evil. Since we

Again from Tixall this wild mood of hers Hath vexed her more than all men's

enmities Should move a heart more constant.

Verily, I thought she had held more rule upon

herself

Than to call out on beggars at the gate When she rode forth, crying she had

naught to give, Being all as much a beggar too as they,

With all things taken from her. Mary Beaton. Being so served,

In sooth she should not show nor shame nor spleen. It was but seventeen days ye held her

there Away from all attendance, as in bonds

Kept without change of raiment, and to find, Being thence haled hither again, no

nobler use, But all her papers plundered - then

her keys By force of violent threat wrung from

the hand She scarce could stir to help herself

abed: These were no matters that should

move her. Paulet. None.

If she be clean of conscience, whole of heart,

Nor else than pure in purpose, but maligned

Of men's suspicions: how should one thus wronged

But hold all hard chance good to approve her case

Blameless, give praise for all, turn all to thanks

That might unload her of so sore a charge,

Despoiled not, but disburdened? Her great wrath

Pleads hard against her, and itself

spake loud

Alone, ere other witness might unseal Wrath's fierce interpretation: which ere long

Was of her secretaries expounded.

Mary Beaton. Sir,

As you are honorable, and of equal

Have shown such grace as man being manful may

maniui may

To such a piteous prisoner as desires Naught now but what may hurt not loyalty

Though you comply therewith to com-

fort her,

Let her not think your spirit so far incensed

By wild words of her mistress cast on vou

In heat of heart and bitter fire of

That you should now close ears against a prayer

Which else might fairly find them open.

Paulet. Speak

More short and plainly: what I well may grant

Shall so seem easiest granted.

Mary Beaton. There should be

No cause, I think, to seal your lips up, though

I crave of them but so much breath as may

Give mine ear knowledge of the witness borne

(If aught of witness were against her borne)

By those her secretaries you spake of. Paulet. This

With hard expostulation was drawn forth

At last of one and other, that they twain

Had writ by record from their lady's

To Babington some letter which implies Close conscience of his treason, and good-will

To meet his service with complicity:

But one thing found therein of dead liest note

The Frenchman swore they set not down, nor she

Bade write one word of favor nor assent Answering this murderous motion toward our queen:

Only, saith he, she held herself not bound

For love's sake to reveal it, and thereby For love of enemies do to death such friends

As only for her own love's sake were found

Fit men for murderous treason: and so much

Her own hand's transcript of the word she sent

Should once produced bear witness of her.

Mary Beaton. Ay?

How then came this withholden?

Paulet. If she speak

But truth, why, truth should sure be manifest,

And shall, with God's good-will, to good men's joy

That wish not evil: as at Fotheringay When she shall come to trial must be tried

If it be truth or no: for which assay
You shall do toward her well and faith
fully

To bid her presently prepare her soul That it may there make answer.

Mary Beaton. Presently?

Paulet. Upon the arraignment of her friends who stand

As 'twere at point of execution now Ere sentence pass upon them of their

Would you no more with me?

Mary Beaton. I am bounden to you

For thus much tidings granted.

Paulet. So farewell. [Exit. Mary Beaton. So fare I well or ill as one who knows

He shall not fare much further toward his end.

Here looms on me the landmark of my

That I have looked for now some score of years

Even with long-suffering eagerness of heart

And a most hungry patience. I did know,

Yea, God, thou knowest I knew this all that while,

From that day forth when even these eyes beheld

Fall the most faithful head in all the world.

Toward her most loving, and of me most loved,

By doom of hers that was so loved of He could not love me nor his life at all.

Nor his own soul, nor aught that all men love,

Nor could fear death nor very God, or

If there were aught more merciful in heaven

Than love on earth had been to him. Chastelard.

I have not had the name upon my lips That stands for sign of love the truest in man

Since first love made him sacrifice of

This long sad score of years retribu-

Since it was cast out of her heart and mind

Who made it mean a dead thing; nor, I think.

Will she remember it before she die More than in France the memories of old friends

Are like to have yet forgotten; but for

Haply, thou knowest, so death not all be death If all these years I have had not in

my mind Through all these chances this one

thought in all, -That I shall never leave her till she

Nor surely now shall I much longer

serve Who fain would lie down at her foot and sleep,

Fain, fain have done with waking. Yet And make its fang more feared for my soul

Knows, and yet God knows, I would set not hand

To such a work as might put on the time.

And make death's foot more forward for her sake:

Yea, were it to deliver mine own soul From bondage and long-suffering of my life,

I would not set mine hand to work her wrong,

Tempted I was - but hath God need of me

To work his judgment, bring his time about,

Approve his justice if the word be just, That whose doeth shall suffer his own deed.

Bear his own blow, to weep tears back for tears,

And bleed for bloodshed? God should spare me this

That once I held the one good hope on earth. —

To be the mean and engine of her end, Or some least part at least therein: I prayed,

God, give me so much grace - who now should pray,

Tempt me not, God. My heart swelled once to know

I bore her death about me; as I think Indeed I bear it: but what need hath God

That I should clinch his doom with craft of mine?

What needs the wrath of hot Elizabeth Be blown aflame with mere past writing read.

Which hath to enkindle it higher al ready proof

Of present practice on her state and,

Shall fear of death or love of England fail,

Or memory faint, or foresight fall stark blind,

That there should need the whet and spur of shame

To turn her spirit into some chafing snake's.

mortal? Yet

I am glad, and I repent me not, to know I have the writing in my bosom sealed That bears such matter, with her own

hand signed,

As she that yet repents her not to have writ
Repents her not that she refrained to

And fears not but long since it felt the

fire —
Being fire itself to burn her, yet un-

quenched,
But in my hand here covered harmless

Which had in charge to burn it. What perchance

Might then the reading of it have wrought for us,

If all this fiery poison of her scoffs
Making the foul froth of a serpent's
tongue

More venomous, and more deadly toward her queen,

Even Bess of Hardwick's bitterest babbling tales,

Had touched at heart the Tudor vein indeed?

Enough it yet were surely, though that

Were now the gentlest that such hearts may hold,

And all doubt's trembling balance that way bent,

To turn, as with one mortal grain cast in,

The scale of grace against her life that writ,

And weigh down pity deathward.

Enter MARY STUART.

Mary Stuart. Have we found

Such kindness of our keeper as may give

Some ease from expectation? or must hope Still fret for ignorance how long here

we stay
As men abiding judgment?

Mary Beaton. Now not long, He tells me, need we think to tarry; since

The time and place of trial are set, next month

To hold it in the castle of Fotheringay.

Mary Stuart. Why, he knows well I were full easily moved

To set forth hence; there must I find more scope

To commune with the ambassador of France

By letter thence to London: but, God help,

Think these folk truly, doth she verily think,

What never man durst yet, nor woman dreamed,

May one that is nor man nor woman think,

To bring a queen born subject of no laws

Here in subjection of an alien law By foreign force of judgment? Were

she wise, Might she not have me privily made

away? And being nor wise, nor valiant but of

tongue, Could she find yet foolhardiness of heart

Enough to attaint the rule of royal rights

With murderous madness? I will think not this

Till it be proven indeed.

Mary Beaton. A month come round, This man protests, will prove it.

Mary Stuart. Ay 1 protests?
What protestation of what Protestant

Can unmake law that was of God's mouth made,

Unwrite the writing of the world, unsay The general saying of ages? If I go,

Compelled of God's hand or constrained of man's,

Yet God shall bid me not nor man enforce

My tongue to plead before them for my life.

I had rather end as kings before me, die

Rather by shot or stroke of murderous hands,

Than so make answer once in face of

As one brought forth to judgment. Are they mad,

And she most mad for envious heart of all,

To make so mean account of me? Methought,

When late we came back hither, soiled and spent

And sick with travel, I had seen their worst of wrong

Full-faced, with its most outrage: when

My servant Curle's young new-delivered wife

Without priest's comfort, and her babe unblessed,

A nameless piteous thing born ere its time,

And took it from the mother's arms abed.

And bade her have good comfort, since myself

Would take all charge against her husband laid

On mine own head to answer, — deeming not

Man ever durst bid answer for myself

On charge as mortal, — and, mine almoner gone,

Did I not crave of Paulet for a grace His chaplain might baptize me this poor babe,

And was denied it, and with mine own hands

For shame and charity moved to christen her

There with scant ritual, in his heretic

By mine own woful name, whence God, I pray,

For her take off its presage? I misdeemed,

Who deemed all these and yet far more than these

For one born queen indignities enough, On one crowned head enough of buffets; more

Hath time's hand laid upon me; yet I keep

keep Faith in one word I spake to Paulet, say-

Two things were mine though I stood spoiled of all

As of my letters and my privy coin
By pickpurse hands of office: these
things yet

Might none take thievish hold upon to strip

His prisoner naked of her natural dower,—

The blood yet royal running here unspilled,

And that religion which I think to keep Fast as this royal blood until I die.

So, where at last and howsoe'er I fare, I need not much take thought, nor thou for love

Take of thy mistress pity: yet meseems
They dare not work their open will on
me:

But God's it is that shall be done, and I Find end of all in quiet. I would sleep On this strange news of thine, that being awake

I may the freshlier front my sense there-

And thought of life or death. Come in with me.

### SCENE III. - TYBURN.

A Crowd of Citizens.

First Citizen. Is not their hour yet on? Men say the queen Bade spare no jot of torment in their

end That law might lay upon them.

Second Citizen. Truth it is,
To spare what scourge soe'er man's
justice may

Twist for such caitiff traitors, were to grieve

God's with mere inobservance. Hear you not

How yet the loud lewd braggarts of their side

Keep heart to threaten that for all this foil

They are not foiled indeed, but yet the

They are not foiled indeed, but yet the work

Shall prosper with deliverance of their queen,
And death for her of ours, though they

should give Of their own lives for one an hundred-

Of their own lives for one an hundredfold?

Third Citizen. These are bold mouths: one that shall die to dat

Being this last week arraigned at West-

Had no such heart, they say, to his defence,

Who was the main head of their treasons.

First Citizen. Ay,

And yesterday, if truth belie not him,

Durst with his doomed hand write some word of prayer

To the queen's self, her very grace, to crave

Grace of her for his gracelessness, that she

Might work, on one too tainted to deserve,

A miracle of compassion, whence her

For pity of sins too great for pity of

Might shine more glorious than his crime showed foul

In the eye of such a mercy.

Second Citizen. Yet men said He spake at his arraignment soberly

With clear mild looks and gracious gesture, showing

The purport of his treasons in such wise

That it seemed pity of him to hear them, how

All their beginnings and proceedings had

First head and fountain only for their

spring From ill persuasions of that poisonous

Who stood the guiltiest near, by this man's side

Approved a valiant villain. Barnwell next,

Who came but late from Ireland here to court,

Made simply protestation of design To work no personal ill against the queen,

Nor paint rebellion's face as murder's red

With blood imperial: Tichborne then avowed

He knew the secret of their aim, and kept,

And held forsooth himself no traitor,
yet
In the end would even plead guilty:

Donne with him, And Salisbury, who not less professed

And Salisbury, who not less professed he still

Stood out against the killing of the queen,

And would not hurt her for a kingdom. So,

When thus all these had pleaded, one by one
Was each man bid say fairly for his

Was each man bid say fairly, for his part,
Why sentence should not pass: and Bal-

lard first,

Who had been so sorely racked he might not stand,
Spake, but as seems to none effect; of

whom
Said Babington again, he set then

Said Babington again, he set them on,

He first, and most of all him, who believed

This priest had power to assoil his soul alive
Of all else mortal treason, Ballard

then, As in sad scorn — Yea, Master Babing-

Quoth he, lay all upon me, but I wish For you the shedding of my blood might

The saving of your life: howbeit, for that,

Say what you will; and I will say no more.

Nor spake the swordsman Savage aught again,

Who, first arraigned, had first avowed his cause

Guilty; nor yet spake Tichborne aught but Donne

Spake, and the same said Barnwell, - each had sinned

For very conscience only; Salisbury last

Besought the queen remission of his guilt.

Then spake Sir Christopher Hatton for the rest

That sat with him commissioners, and showed

How by dark doctrine of the seminaries,

And instance most of Ballard, had been brought

To extreme destruction here of body and soul A sort of brave youths otherwise en-

dowed With goodly gifts of birthright; and in

fine

There was the sentence given that here

There was the sentence given that here even now

Shows seven for dead men in our present sight,

And shall bring six to-morrow forth to die.

Enter Babington, Ballard (carried in a chair), Tichborne, Savage, Barnwell, Tilney, and Abington, guarded: Sheriff, Executioner, Chaplain, etc.

First Citizen. What, will they speak? Second Citizen. Ay; each hath leave in turn

To show what mood he dies in toward his cause.

Ballard. Sirs, ye that stand to see us take our doom,

I being here given this grace to speak to you

Have but my word to witness for my soul,

That all I have done and all designed to do

Was only for advancement of true faith To furtherance of religion: for myself Aught would I never, but for Christ's dear church

Was mine intent all wholly, to redeem Her sore affliction in this age and land, As now may not be yet: which knowing for truth,

I am readier even at heart to die than

And dying I crave of all men pardon whom

My doings at all have touched, or who thereat

Take scandal; and forgiveness of the queen

If on this cause I have offended her.

Savage. The like say I, that have no skill in speech,

But heart enough with faith at heart to die,

Seeing but for conscience and the common good,

And no preferment but this general weal,

I did attempt this business.

Barnwell. I confess

That I, whose seed was of that hallowed earth

Whereof each pore hath sweated blood for Christ,

Had note of these men's drifts, which I deny

That ever I consented with, or could In conscience hold for lawful. That I came

To spy for them occasions in the court, And there being noted of her Majesty She seeing mine eyes peer sharply like a man's

That had such purpose as she wist before

Prayed God that all were well — if this were urged,

I might make answer, it was not unknown

To divers of the council that I there Had matters to solicit of mine own Which thither drew me then: yet I confess

That Babington, espying me thence returned,

Asked me what news: to whom again I told,

Her majesty had been abroad that day,

With all the circumstance I saw there.

If I have done her majesty offence, I crave her pardon: and assuredly If this my body's sacrifice might yet Establish her in true religion, here

Most willingly should this be offered up.

Tilney. I came not here to reason of my faith,

But to die simply like a Catholic, pray-

Christ give our queen Elizabeth long life,

And warning all youth born take heed by me.

Abington. I likewise, and if aught I have erred in aught

I crave but pardon as for ignorant sin, Holding at all points firm the Catholic faith;

And all things charged against me I confess.

Save that I ever sought her highness' death:

In whose poor kingdom yet ere long, I fear.

Will be great bloodshed.

Sheriff. Seest thou, Abington,

Here all these people present of thy kind

Whose blood shall be demanded at thy hands

If dying thou hide what might endanger them?

Speak therefore, why or by what mortal mean

Should there be shed such blood?

Abington. All that I know

You have on record: take but this for sure,—

This country lives for its iniquity

Loathed of all countries, and God loves it not.

Whereon I pray you trouble me no more With questions of this world, but let

me pray, And in mine own wise make my peace

with God.

Babington. For me, first head of all

this enterprise,
I needs must make this record of my-

I have not conspired for profit, but in

Of men's persuasions whence I stood assured

This work was lawful which I should have done.

And meritorious as toward God; for

No less I crave forgiveness of my queen, And that my brother may possess my lands

In heritage else forfeit with my head. Tichborne. Good countrymen and my dear friends, you look

For something to be said of me, that am

But an ill orator; and my text is worse.

Vain were it to make full discourse of all This cause that brings me hither, which

before Was all made bare, and is well known

Was all made bare, and is well known to most

That have their eyes upon me: let me stand

For all young men, and most for those born high,

Their present warning here: a friend I had,

Ay, and a dear friend, one of whom I made

No small account, whose friendship for pure love

To this hath brought me: I may not deny

He told me all the matter, how set down,

And ready to be wrought; which always I

Held impious, and denied to deal therein: But only for my friend's regard was I

Silent, and verified a saying in me, Who so consented to him. Ere this

thing chanced,
How brotherly we twain lived heart in

Together, in what flourishing estate, This town well knows: of whom went all report

Through her loud length of Fleet-street and the Strand

And all parts else that sound men's fortunate names,

But Babington and Tichborne? that

There was no haughtiest threshold found of force

To brave our entry; thus we lived our

life, And wanted nothing we might wish for:

For me, what less was in my head, God knows,

Than high state matters? Give me now but leave

Scarce to declare the miseries I sustained Since I took knowledge of this action, whence

To his estate I well may liken mine, Who could forbear not one forbidden thing

To enjoy all else afforded of the world: The terror of my conscience hung on

Who, taking heed what perils girt me, went

To Sir John Peters hence in Essex,

Appointing that my horses by his mean Should meet me here in London, whence I thought

To flee into the country: but being here

I heard how all was now bewrayed abroad;

Whence Adam-like we fled into the woods,

And there were taken. My dear countrymen,

Albeit my sorrows well may be your joy,

Yet mix your smiles with tears: pity my case,

Who, born out of an house whose name descends

Even from two hundred years ere Eng-

lish earth

Felt Norman heel upon her, wore it

yet
Till this mishap of mine unspotted.

I have a wife, and one sweet child: my wife,

My dear wife Agnes: and my grief is there:

And for six sisters too left on my hand:
All my poor servants were dispersed, I
know,

Upon their master's capture: all which things

Most heartily I sorrow for: and though Naught might I less have merited at her hands,

Yet had I looked for pardon of my fault
From the queen's absolute grace and

clemency;

That the unexpired remainder of my years

Might in some sort have haply recompensed

This former guilt of mine whereof I die:

But seeing such fault may find not such release

Even of her utter mercies, heartily

I crave at least of her and all the world Forgiveness, and to God commend my soul,

And to men's memory this my penitence Till our death's record die from out the land.

First Citizen. God pardon him! Stand back: what ail these knaves

To drive and thrust upon us? Help me, sir;

I thank you: hence we take them full in view:

Hath yet the hangman there his knife in hand?

### ACT III. - BURGHLEY.

Scene I. - The presence - chamber in Fotheringay Castle. At the upper end, a chair of state as for QUEEN ELIZA-BETH; opposite, in the centre of the hall, a chair for MARY STUART. The Commissioners seated on either side along the wall: to the right, the Earls, with LORD CHANCELLOR BROMLEY and LORD TREASURER BURGHLEY; to the left, the Barons, with the Knights of the Privy Council, among them WALSINGHAM and PAULET; POP-HAM, EGERTON, and GAWDY, as Counsel for the Crown. Enter MARY STUART, supported by SIR ANDREW MELVILLE, and takes her place.

Mary Stuart. Here are full many men of counsel met;

Not one for me.

[The Chancellor rises.
Bromley. Madam, this court is held

To make strait inquisition as by law
Of what with grief of heart our queen
has heard, —

A plot upon her life, against the faith Here in her kingdom stablished: on

which cause

Our charge it is to exact your answer here.

And put to proof your guilt or inno-

Mary Stuart (rising). Sirs, whom by strange constraint I stand before, My lords, and not my judges, — since

no law Can hold to mortal judgment answer-

able

A princess free-born of all courts on earth, —

I rise not here to make response as one Responsible toward any for my life, Or of mine acts accountable to man,

Who see none higher save only God in heaven.

neaven.

I am no natural subject of your land, That I should here plead as a criminal charged,

Nor in such wise appear I now: I came On your queen's faith to seek in Eng-

land help
By trothplight pledged me: where by
promise-breach

I am even since then her prisoner held in ward:

Yet, understanding by report of you Some certain things I know not of to

Against me brought on record, by my

I stand content to hear and answer these.

Bromley. Madam, there lives none born on earth so high

Who for this land's laws' breach within this land

Shall not stand answerable before those laws.

Burghley. Let there be record of the

prisoner's plea And answer given such protest here set

down,
And so proceed we to this present

charge.

Gawdy. My lords, to unfold by length

of circumstance
The model of this whole conspiracy

Should lay the pattern of all treasons bare

That ever brought high state in danger.
This

No man there lives among us but hath heard, —

How certain men of our queen's household folk,

Being wrought on by persuasion of their priests,

Drew late a bond between them, binding these

With others of their faith accomplices Directed first of Anthony Babington By mean of six for execution chosen

To slay the queen their mistress, and thereon

Make all her trustiest men of trust away;

As, my lord treasurer Burghley present here,

Lord Hunsdon, and Sir Francis Walsingham,

And one that held in charge a while agone

This lady now on trial, — Sir Francis Knowles.

That she was hereto privy, to her power Approving and abetting their device,

It shall not stand us in much need to show,

Whose proofs are manifoldly manifest On record written of their hands and hers.

Mary Stuart. Of all this I know nothing: Babington

I have used for mine intelligencer, sent With letters charged at need, but never

Spake with him, never writ him word of mine

As privy to these close conspiracies, Nor word of his had from him. Never

One harmful thought upon me toward your queen,

Nor knowledge ever that of other hearts Was harm designed against her.

Proofs, ye say,
Forsooth ye hold to impeach me: t

desire
But only to behold and handle them

If they in sooth of sense be tangible More than mere air and shadow.

Burghley. Let the clerk Produce those letters writ from Babing ton. Mary Stuart. What then? It may be such were writ of him:

Be it proved that they came ever in my hands.

If Babington affirm so much, I say

He, or who else will say it, lies openly.

Gawdy. Here is the man's confession

writ: and here

Ballard's the Jesuit; and the soldier's here,

Savage, that served with Parma. Mary Stuart. What of these?

Traitors they were, and traitor-like they lied.

Gawdy. And here the last her letter of response

Confirming and approving in each point

Their purpose, writ direct to Babington.

Mary Stuart. My letter? None of mine it is . perchance

It may be in my cipher charactered, But never came from or my tongue or

I have sought mine own deliverance, and thereto

Solicited of my friends their natural help:

Yet certain whom I list not name there were,

Whose offers made of help to set me free

Receiving, yet I answered not a word. Howbeit, desiring to divert the storm Of persecution from the Church, for this

To your queen's grace I have made most earnest suit:

But for mine own part, I would purchase not

This kingdom with the meanest one man's death

In all its commonalty, much less the queen's.

Many there be have dangerously designed

Things that I knew not: yea, but very late

There came a letter to my hand which craved

My pardon if by enterprise of some Were undertaken aught unknown of

A cipher lightly may one counterfeit, As he that vaunted him of late in

France

To be my son's base brother; and I fear

Lest this, for aught mine ignorance of it knows,

May be that secretary's fair handiwork

May be that secretary's fair handiwork
Who sits to judge me, and hath practised late,

I hear, against my son's life and mine own.

But I protest I have not so much as thought

Nor dreamed upon destruction of the queen:

I had rather spend most gladly mine own life

Than for my sake the Catholics should be thus

Afflicted only in very hate of me,

And drawn to death so cruel as these tears

Gush newly forth to think of. Burghley. Here no man

Who hath showed himself true subject to the state

Was ever for religion done to death; But some for treason, that against the queen

Upheld the pope's bull and authority.

Mary Stuart. Yet have I heard it otherwise affirmed.

And read in books set forth in print as much.

Burghley They that so write say too the queen hath here

Made forfeit of her royal dignity.

Walsingham. Here I call God to record on my part That personally or as a private man

I have done naught misbeseeming honesty,

Nor as I bear a public person's place Done aught thereof unworthy. I confess

That, being right careful of the queen's estate

And safety of this realm, I have curiously

Searched out the practices against it

Herein had Ballard offered me his help

I durst not have denied him; yea, I

Have recompensed the pains he had taken. Say

I have practised aught with him, why did he not,

To save his life, reveal it?

Mary Stuart. Pray you, sir,

Take no displeasure at me. truth it is Report has found me of your dealings, blown

From lip to ear abroad, wherein myself I put no credit; and could but desire

Yourself would all as little make account

Of slanders flung on me. Spies, sure, are men

Of doubtful credit, which dissemble things

Far other than they speak. Do not believe

That I gave ever or could give consent Once to the queen's destruction. I would never,

These tears are bitter witness, never would

Make shipwreck of my soul by compassing

Destruction of my dearest sister.

Gawdy. This

Shall soon by witness be disproved: as here

Even by this letter from Charles Paget's hand

Transcribed, which Curle your secretary hath borne,

Plain witness you received, touching a league

Betwixt Mendoza and Ballard, who conferred

Of this land's fore-ordained invasion, thence

To give you freedom.

Mary Stuart, What of this? ye shoot Wide of the purpose, this approves not me

Consenting to the queen's destruction.

Gawdy. That stands proven enough by word of Babington,

Who dying avowed it, and by letters passed

From him to you, whom he therein acclaims

As his most dread and sovereign lady and queen,

And by the way makes mention pass

And by the way makes mention passingly

Of a plot laid by transference to con vey

This kingdom to the Spaniard. Mary Stuart. I confess

There came a priest unto me, saying if I Would not herein bear part, I with my son

Alike should be debarred the inherit ance:

His name ye shall not have of me; but this

Ye know, that openly the Spaniard lays Claim to your kingdom, and to none will give

Place ever save to me.

Burghley. Still stands the charge, On written witness of your secretaries, Great on all points against you.

Mary Stuart. Wherefore then

Are not these writers with these writings brought

To outface me front to front? For Gilbert Curle,

He is in the Frenchman's hands a waxen toy,

Whom the other, once mine uncle's secretary,

The Cardinal's of Lorraine, at his mere will

Moulds, turns, and tempers, being himself a knave

That may be hired or scared with peril or coin

To swear what thing men bid him.

Truth again

Is this that I deny not seeing myself.

Is this that I deny not, seeing myself Against all right held fast in English ward,

I have sought all help where I might hope to find;

Which thing that I dispute not, let this

The sign that I disclaim no jot of truth In all objected to me. For the rest,

All majesty that moves in all the world, And all safe station of all princes born, Fall, as things unrespected, to the ground,

If on the testimony of secretaries

And on their writings merely these depend,

Being to their likeness thence debased.
For me.

Naught I delivered to them but what

Nature to me delivered, that I might Recover yet at length my liberty.

I am not to be convicted save alone
By mine own word or writing. If these
men

Have written toward the queen my sister's hurt

Aught, I wist naught of all such writ at all:

Let them be put to punishment; I am sure,

Were these here present, they by testi-

Would oring me clear of blame. Gawdy. Yet by their mean

They could not in excuse of you deny
That letters of communion to and
fro

Have passed between you and the Spaniard, whence

What should have come on England and the queen

These both well know, and with what messages

Were English exiles entertained of you By mean of these men, of your secretaries.

Confirmed and cherished in conspiracy For this her kingdom's overthrow: in France

Paget and Morgan, traitors in design Of one close mind with you, and in your

Cheered hence for constant service.

Mary Stuart. That I sought Comfort and furtherance of all Catholic states,

By what mean found soever just and good,

Your mistress from myself had note long

since
And open warning: uncompelled I

made Avowal of such my righteous purpose,

In aught may disavow it. Of these late plots

No proof is here to attaint mine innocence,

Who dare all proof against me: Babing ton

I know not of, nor Ballard, nor their works;

But kings my kinsmen, powers that serve the Church,

These I confess my comforters, in hope Held fast of their alliance. Yet again I challenge in the witness of my words The notes writ of these letters here alleged

In mine own hand: if these ye bring not forth.

Judge all good men if I be not con-

In all your hearts already, who perchance,

For all this pageant held of lawless law,

Have bound yourselves by pledge to speak me dead.

But I would have you look into your souls,

Remembering how the theatre of the world

Is wider, in whose eye ye are judged that

judge,
Than this one realm of England.

Burghley. Toward that realm Suffice it here that, madam, you stand

charged
With deadly purpose: being of proven
intent

To have your son conveyed to Spain, and give

The title you pretend upon our crown Up with his wardship to King Philip.

Mary Stuart. Nay,

I have no kingdom left to assign, nor

Whereof to make conveyance: yet is

But lawful, that of all things which are

I may dispose at pleasure, and to none Stand on such count accountable.

Burghley. So be it

So far as may be; but your ciphers sent

By Curle's plain testimony to Babing

To the lord Lodovic, and to Fernihurst, Once provost on your part in Edinburgh, By mean of Grange your friend his father-in-law.

Speak not but as with tongue imperial,

nor

Of import less than kingdoms. Mary Stuart. Surely, sir,

Such have I writ, and many; nor therein

Beyond my birth have trespassed, to commend

That lord you speak of, and another,

both My friends in faith, to a cardinal's dig-

And that, I trust, without offence:

except
It be not held as lawful on my part

To commune with the chiefest of my

By written word on matters of mine own As for your queen with churchfolk of her kind.

Burghley. Well were it, madam, that with some of yours

You had held less close communion: since by proof

Reiterated from those your secretaries It seems you know right well that Morgan who

Sent Parry privily to despatch the queen, And have assigned him annual pension. Mary Stuart. This

I know not, whether or no your charge

be truth;
But I do know this Morgan hath lost

For my sake, and in honor sure I am That rather to relieve him I stand

Than to revenge an injury done your queen

By one that lives my friend, and hath deserved

Well at mine hands: yet, being not bound to this,

I did affright the man from such attempts

Of crimes against her, who contrariwise Hath out of England openly assigned Pensions to Gray my traitor, and the Scots

Mine adversaries, as also to my son, To hire him to forsake me.

Burghley. Nay, but seeing

By negligence of them that steered the state

The revenues of Scotland sore impaired, Somewhat in bounty did her grace bestow

Upon your son the king, her kinsman: whom

She would not, being to her so near of blood,

Forget from charity. No such help it was,

Nor no such honest service, that your friends

Designed you, who by letters hither writ

To Paget and Mendoza sent as here Large proffers of strange aid from oversea

To right you by her ruin.

Mary Stuart. Here was naught Aimed for your queen's destruction:

nor is this

Against me to be charged, that foreign friends

Should labor for my liberty. Thus much

At sundry times I have signified aloud By open message to her, that I would still

Seek mine own freedom. Who shall bar me this?

Who tax me with unreason, that I sent Unjust conditions on my part to be To her propounded, which now many

times
Have alway found rejection? yea, when

even
For hostages I proffered in my stead

To be delivered up with mine own son

The Duke of Guise's, both to stand in pledge

That nor your queen nor kingdom should through me

Take aught of damage; so that hence by proof

I see myself utterly from all hope

Already barred of freedom. But I now Am dealt with most unworthily, whose fame And honorable repute are called in doubt

Before such foreign men of law as may By miserable conclusions of their craft Draw every thin and shallow circumstance

Out into compass of a consequence: Whereas the anointed heads and con-

Of princes are not subject to such laws As private men are. Next, whereas ye are given

Authority but to look such matters through

As tend to the hurt of your queen's person, yet

Here is the cause so handled, and so

Here are my letters wrested, that the faith

Which I profess, the immunity and

Of foreign princes, and their private

Of mutual speech by word reciprocate From royal hand to royal, all in one Are called in question, and myself by

force Brought down beneath my kingly

dignity, And made to appear before a judgment-seat

As one held guilty; to none end but this, ill to none other purpose, but that I Might from all natural favor of the queen

Be quite excluded, and my right cut

From claim hereditary: whereas I stand

Here of mine own good-will to clear myself

Of all objected to me, lest I seem To have aught neglected in the full

defence

Of mine own innocency and honor.

Would I bring likewise in your minds, how once

This queen herself of yours, Elizabeth, Was drawn in question of conspiracy That Wyatt raised against her sister,

yet

Ye know she was most innocent. For

With very heart's religion I affirm, Though I desire the Catholics here

might stand

Assured of safety, this I would not vet Buy with the blood and death of any

And on mine own part rather would I

Esther than Judith; for the people's sake

To God make intercession, than deprive The meanest of the people born of life.

Mine enemies have made broad repor aloud

That I was irreligious: yet the time Has been, I would have learnt the faith ye hold,

But none would suffer me, for all \$ sought,

To find such teaching at your teachers hands:

As though they cared not what my sou became.

And now at last, when all ye can ye have done

Against me, and have barred me from my right,

Ye may chance fail yet of your cause and hope. To God and to the princes of my kin

I make again appeal, from you again Record my protestation, and reject All judgment of your court: I had.

rather die Thus undishonored, even a thousand

deaths, Than so bring down the height of

majesty; Yea, and thereby confess myself as bound

By all the laws of England, even in

Of things religious, who could never learn

What manner of laws these were: I am

destitute Of counsellors, and who shall be my

To judge my cause through, and give doom thereon,

I am ignorant wholly, being an absolute For all most reasonable conditions queen,

And will do naught which may impair

that state

In me nor other princes, nor my son; Since yet my mind is not dejected, nor Will I sink under my calamity.

My notes are taken from me, and no

Dares but step forth to be my advocate. I am clear from all crime done against the queen,

I have stirred not up one man against

her: vet,

Albeit of many dangers overpast

I have thoroughly forewarned her, still I found

No credit, but have always been contemned.

Though nearest to her in blood allied. When late

Ye made association, and thereon

An act against their lives on whose behalt,

Though innocent even as ignorance of

it, aught

Might be contrived to endangering of the queen

From foreign force abroad, or privy

plots

At home of close rebellion, I foresaw That, whatsoever of peril so might rise Or more than all this for religion's sake.

My many mortal enemies in her court Should lay upon me all the charge,

and I

Bear the whole blame of all men.

Certainly,

I weil might take it hardly, nor without High cause, that such confederacy was

With mine own son, and I not knowing: but this

I speak not of, being not so grieved thereat

As that mine own dear sister, that the queen.

Is misinformed of me, and I, now kept These many years in so strait prison, and grown

Lame of my limbs, have lien neglected,

made

Or proffered to redeem my liberty

Found audience or acceptance; and at last

Here am I set with none to plead for

But this I pray, that on this matter o'

Another meeting there be kept, and I Be granted on my part an advocate

To hold my cause up; or that, seeing ye know

I am a princess, I may be believed

By mine own word, being princely: for should I

Stand to your judgment, who most plainly I see

Are armed against me strong in preju-

It were mine extreme folly: more than

That ever I came to England in such

As of the plighted friendship of your queen.

And comfort of her promise. Look, my lords,

Here on this ring: her pledge of love was this,

And surety, sent me when I lay in Of mine own rebels once; regard it

well: In trust of this I came amongst you.

But sees what faith I have found to

keep this trust. Burghley. Whereas I bear a double

person, being Commissioner first, then counsellor in

this cause, From me as from the queen's commis

sioner here Receive a few words first. Your prot-

est made Is now on record, and a transcr'pt of it

Shall be delivered you. To us in given Under the queen's hand our authority, whence

Is no appeal, this grant being ratifed With the great seal of England; nor are we

With prejudice come hither, but to judge

By the straight rule of justice. On their part,

These the queen's learned counsel here in place

Do level at nothing else but that the

Do level at nothing else but that the truth

May come to light, how far you have made offence

Against the person of the queen. To

Full power is given to hear and diligently

Examine all the matter, though yourself

Were absent: yet for this did we desire

To have your presence here, lest we might seem

To have derogated from your honor;

Designed to object against you any thing

But what you knew of, or took part therein.

Against the queen's life bent. For this were these

Your letters brought in question, but to unfold

Your aim against her person, and therewith

All matters to it belonging; which perforce

Are so with other matters interlaced
As none may sever them. Hence was
there need

Set all these forth, not parcels here and there,

Whose circumstances do the assurance give

I'pon what points you dealt with Babington.

Mary Stuart. The circumstances haply may find proof,

But the fact never. Mine integrity
Nor on the memory nor the credit
hangs

Of these my secretaries, albeit I know They are men of honest hearts, yet if they have

Confessed in fear of torture any thing, Or hope of guerdon and impunity, It may not be admitted, for just cause Which I will otherwhere allege. Men's

Are with affections diversly distraught And borne about of passion: no: would these

Have ever avowed such things against me, save

For their own hope and profit. Letters may

Toward other hands be outwardly addressed

Than they were writ for: yea, and many times

Have many things been privily slipped in mine

Which from my tongue came never.
Were I not

Reft of my papers, and my secretary

Kept from me better might I then

Kept from me, better might I then confute

These things cast up against me. Burghley. But there shall

Be nothing brought against you save what last

Stands charged, even since the nineteenth day of June: Nor would your papers here avail you

seeing Your secretaries, and Babington him

your secretaries, and Babington him self,

Being of the rack unquestioned, have affirmed
You sent those letters to him; which

though yourself Deny, yet whether more belief should

here
On affirmation or negation hang

Let the commissioners judge. But, to come back,

This next I tell you as a counsellor, Time after time you have put forth

many things Propounded for your freedom; that all

these Have fallen all profitless, 'tis long of

And of the Scots; in no wise of the queen.

For first the lords of Scotland, being required,

Flatly resused, to render up the king

In hostage: and when treaty last was held

Upon your freedom, then was Parry

By your dependant Morgan privily To make the queen away by murder.

Mary Stuart. Ah! You are my adversary.

Burghley. Yea, surely I am

To the queen's adversaries an adversary.

But now hereof enough: let us proceed Henceforth to proofs.

Mary Stuart. I will not hear them.

Burghley. Yet

Hear them will we.

Mary Stuart. And in another place

I too will hear them, and defend myself

I too will hear them, and defend myself.

Gawdy. First let your letters to

Charles Paget speak,

Wherein you show him there is none

other way
For Spain to bring the Netherlands
again

To the old obedience, but by setting up A prince in England that might help his cause;

Then to Lord Paget, to bring hastilier His forces up for help to invade this

land;

And Cardinal Allen's letter, hailing you His most dread sovereign lady, and signifying

The matter to the prince of Parma's care

To be commended.

Mary Stuart. I am so sore beset,
I k-2.7 not how by point and circumstance

To meet your manifold impeachments.
This

I see through all this charge for evil truth,

That Babington and my two secretaries Have even to excuse themselves accused me: yet,

As touching that conspiracy, this I say,

Of those six men for execution chosen I never heard; and all the rest is naught

To this pretended purpose of your charge.

For Cardinal Allen, whatsoe'er he have writ,

I hold him for a reverend prelate, so
To be esteemed, no more: none save
the Pope

Will I acknowledge for the Church's head

And sovereign thence on thought or spirit of mine;

But in what rank and place I stand esteemed

Of him and foreign princes through the world,

I know not, neither can I hinder them

By letters writ of their own hearts and

To hail me queen of England. As for those

Whose duty and plain allegiance sworn to me

Stands flawed in all men's sight, —my secretaries, —

These merit no belief. They which have once

Forsworn themselves, albeit they swear again
With oaths and protestations ne'er so

Are not to be believed. Nor may

these men
By what sworn oath soever hold them
bound

In court of conscience, seeing they have sworn to me

Their secrecy and fidelity before,

And are no subjects of this country.

Nau

Hath warm times writ other than I

Hath many times writ other than I bade,

And Curle sets down whate'er Nau bids

him write;

But for my part I am ready in all to

The burden of their fault, save what may lay

A blot upon mine honor. Haply too These things did they confess to save

themselves; Supposing their avowal could hurt not

who, being a queen, they thought, good ignorant men,

More favorably must needs be dealt withal.

For Ballard, I ne'er heard of any such, But of one Hallard once that proffered

Such help as I would none of, knowing

Had vowed his service too to Walsingham.

Gawdy. Next, from your letters to Mendoza, writ

By Curle, as freely his confession shows,

In privy cipher, take these few brief notes

For perfect witness of your full design.

You find yourself, the Spaniard hears thereby,

Sore troubled what best course to take anew

For your affairs this side the sea,
whereon
Charles Paget both a charge to import

Charles Paget hath a charge to impart from you Some certain overtures to Spain and

him
In your behalf, whom you desire with
prayer

Show freely what he thinks may be obtained

Thus from the king his master. One point more

Have you reserved thereon depending, which

On your behalf you charge him send the king

Some secret word concerning, no man else,

If this be possible, being privy to it: Even this, that seeing your son's great obstinacy

In heresy, and foreseeing too sure thereon

Most imminent danger and harm thence like to ensue

Fo the Catholic Church, he coming to bear rule

Within this kingdom, you are resolved at heart,

In case your son be not reduced again
To the Catholic faith before your death,

— whereof

Plainly you say small hope is yours so long

As he shall bide in Scotland, — to give

To that said king, and grant in absolute right,

Your claim upon succession to this

By your last will made; praying him on this cause

From that time forth wholly to take yourself

Into his keeping, and therewith the state

And charge of all this country; which, you say,

You cannot for discharge of conscience think

That you could put into a prince's hands

More zealous for your faith, and abler found

To build it strong upon this side again, Even as through all parts else of Christendom.

But this let silence keep in secret, lest Being known it be your dowry's loss in France,

And open breach in Scotland with your son,

And in this realm of England utterly Your ruin and destruction. On your

Next is he bidden thank his lord the king For liberal grace and sovereign favor

shown Lord Paget and his brother, which you

pray him
Most earnestly to increase, and gratify
Poor Morgan with some pension for

yo'ır sake,
Who bath not for your sake only en

Who hath not for your sake only endured so much,

But for the common cause. Likewise, and last,

Is one he knows commended to his charge

With some more full supply to be sus-

Than the entertainment that yourself allot

According to the little means you have

Burghley. Hereon stands proof apparent of that charge

Which you but now put by, that you design

To give your right supposed upon this

realm Into the Spaniard's hold; and on that

Lie now at Rome Allen and Parsons,

Your servants and our traitors.

Mary Stuart. No such proof

Lives but by witness of revolted men, My traitors and your helpers; who to

Have broken their allegiance bound by

oath. When, being a prisoner clothed about

with cares,
I languished out of hope of liberty,

Nor yet saw hope to effect of those things aught

Which many and many looked for at my hands,

Declining now through age and sickness, this

To some seemed good, even for religion's sake,

That the succession here of the English crown

Should or be stablished in the Spanish king

Or in some English Catholic. And a book

Was sent to me to avow the Spaniard's claim;

Which being of me allowed not, some there were
In whose displeasure thence I fell; but

now Seeing all my hope in England desper-

ate grown,
I am fully minded to reject no aid

Abroad, but resolute to receive it. Walsingham. Sirs,

Bethink you, were the kingdon, so conveyed,

What should become of you and all of yours,

Estates and honors and posterities, Being to such hands delivered. Burghley. Nay, but these

In no such wise can be conveyed away

By personal will, but by successive right Still must descend in heritage of law.

Whereto your own words witness, saying if this

Were blown abroad your cause were utterly

Lost in all hearts of English friends.
Therein

Your thoughts hit right: for here in all men's minds

That are not mad with envying at the truth,

Death were no loathlier than a stranger king.

If you would any more, speak: if not

If you would any more, speak: if not aught,

This cause is ended.

Mary Stuart. I require again
Before a full and open parliament

Hearing, or speech in person with the queen,

Who shall, I hope, have of a queen regard,

And with the council. So, in trust hereof,

I crave a word with some of you apart, And of this main assembly take farewell.

# ACT. IV. — ELIZABETH.

## Scene I. - RICHMOND.

WALSINGHAM and DAVISON.
Walsingham. It is God's wrath, too
sure, that holds her hand;
His plague upon this people, to pre-

serve

Ry her sole mean her deadliest enemy

By her sole mean her deadliest enemy, known

By proof more potent than approof of law

In all points guilty, but on more than all

Toward all this country dangerous. To take off

From the court held last month at Fotheringay

Authority with so full commission given

To pass upon her judgment — suddenly Cut short by message of some three lines writ With hurrying hand at midnight, and despatched

To maim its work upon the second day, -

What else may this be in so wise a

But madness, as a brand to sear the brain

Of one by God infatuate? yea, and

That she receives the French ambassador

With one more special envoy from his

Except their message touch her spleen with fire,

And so undo itself, we cannot tell

What doubt may work upon her. Had we but

Some sign more evident of some private

Confirming toward her by more personal proof

The Scottish queen's inveteracy, for this

As for our country plucked from immi nent death

We might thank God; but with such gracious words piteous challenge and imperial

She hath wrought by letter on our mis-

tress' mind, We may not think her judgment so

could slip, Borne down with passion or forgetful-

As to leave bare her bitter root of heart

And core of evil will there laboring. Davison. Yet

I see no shade of other surety cast From any sign of likelihood. It were Not shameful more than dangerous, though she bade,

To have her prisoner privily made

Yet stands the queen's heart well-nigh fixed hereon

When aught may seem to fix it; then as fast

Wavers, but veers to that bad point | Seem of their works partaker, he can again

Whence blowing the wind blows down her honor, nor

Brings surety of life with fame's destruc-

Walsingham. Ay,

We are no Catholic keepers, and his charge

Need fear no poison in our watch-dog's fang,

Though he show honest teeth at her, to threat

Thieves' hands with loyal danger.

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, attended by BURGHLEY, LEICESTER, HUNSDON, HATTON, and others of the Council. Elizabeth. No, my lords,

We are not so weak of wit as men that need

Be counselled of their enemies. Blame us not

That we accuse your friendship on this cause

Of too much fearfulness: France we will hear:

Nor doubt but France shall hear us all as loud

As friend or foe may threaten or pro-Of our own heart advised, and resolute

Than hearts that need men's counsel.

Bid them in. Enter CHÂTEAUNEUF and BELLIÈVRE.

attended From our fair cousin of France what message, sirs?

Bellièvre. I, madam, have in special charge to lay

The king's mind open to your majesty, Which gives my tongue first leave of speech more free

Than from a common envoy. Sure it

No man more grieves at what his heart abhors,

The counsels of your highness' enemies.

Than doth the king of France: whereir how far

The queen your prisoner have borne part, or may

judge

Naught: but much less the king may understand

What men may stand accusers, who rise

Judge in so great a matter. Men of law May lay their charges on a subject. but The queen of Scotland, dowager queen of France,

And sister made by wedlock to the king, To none being subject, can be judged

of none

Without such violence done on rule as

breaks

Prerogative of princes. Nor may man That looks upon your present majesty In such clear wise apparent, and retains Remembrance of your name through all the world

For virtuous wisdom, bring his mind to

think

That England's royal-souled Elizabeth, Being set so high in fame, can so forget Wise Plato's word, that common souls are wrought

Out of dull iron and slow lead, but kings

Of gold untempered with so vile alloy As makes all metal up of meaner men But say this were not thus, and all men's awe

Were from all time toward kingship

merely vain,

And state no more worth reverence, yet the plea

Were naught which here your ministers pretend,

That while the queen of Scots lives you may live

No day that knows not danger. Were she dead,

Rather might then your peril wax indeed To shape and sense of heavier portent, whom

The Catholic states now threat not, nor your land,

For this queen's love, but rather for their faith's,

Whose cause, were she by violent hand removed,

Could be but furthered, and its enter-

Put on more strong and prosperous pretext; yea,

You shall but draw the invasion on this

Whose threat you so may think to stay and bring

Imminence down of inroad. Thus far

The queen of Scots hath for your person

Even as a targe or buckler which has caught

All intercepted shafts against your

Shot, or a stone held fast within your hand,

Which, if you cast it thence in fear or wrath

To smite your adversary, is cast away, And no mean left therein for menace,

You lay but hand upon her life, albeit There were that counselled this, her

death will make Your enemies weapons of their own

despair

And give their whetted wrath excuse and More plausibly to strike more peril-

ously. Your grace is known for strong in fore-

sight; we These nineteen years of your wise reign

have kept Fast watch in France upon you: of

those claims Which lineally this queen here prisoner

Put forth on your succession have you

made The stoutest rampire of your rule: and

this Is grown a by-word with us, that their

cause Who shift the base whereon their poli

cies lean

Bows down toward ruin: and of loyal

This will I tell you, madam, which hath been

Given me for truth assured of one whose place

Affirms him honorable, how openly A certain prince's minister that well

May stand in your suspicion says abroad

That for his master's greatness it were good

The queen of Scots were lost already,

seeing
He is well assured the Catholics here

should then All wholly range them on his master's

part.
Thus long hath reigned your highness happily,

Who have lived fair temperance more

than violence: now, While honor bids have mercy, wisdom

Equal at least the scales of interest.

Think
What name shall yours be found in time

far hence, Even as you deal with her that in your

hand Lies not more subject than your fame to

In men's repute that shall be. Bid her

And ever shall my lord stand bound to you,

And you forever firm in praise of men.

Elizabeth. I am sorry, sir, you are
hither come from France

Upon no better errand. I appeal To God for judge between my cause and

hers
Whom here you stand for. In this realm of mine

The queen of Scots sought shelter, and therein

Hath never found but kindness; for which grace

In recompense she hath three times sought my life.

No grief that on this head yet ever fell Shook ever from mine eyes so many a tear

As this last plot upon it. I have read As deep, I doubt me, in as many books As any queen or prince in Christendom, Yet never chanced on aught so strange and sad

As this my state's calamity. Mine own

Is by mere nature precious to myself, And in mine own realm I can live not safe.

I am a poor lone woman, girt about With secret enemies that perpetually

Lay wait for me to kill me. From your

Why have not I my traitor to my hands Delivered up, who now this second time Hath sought to slay me, Morgan? On my part,

Had mine own cousin Hunsdon here conspired

Against the French king's life, he had found not so

Refuge of me, nor even for kindred's sake

From the edge of law protection; and this cause

Needs present evidence of this man's mouth.

Bellièvre. Madam, there stand against the queen of Scots

Already here in England on this charge So many and they so dangerous witnesses,

No need can be to bring one over more: Nor can the king show such unnatural heart

As to send hither a knife for enemies' hands

To cut his sister's throat. Most earnestly My lord expects your resolution; which

If we receive as given against his plea,

I must crave leave to part for Paris

hence. Yet give me pardon first if yet once

I pray your highness be assured, and so Take heed in season, you shall find this

queen More dangerous dead than living. Spare her life,

And not my lord alone, but all that reign,

Shall be your sureties in all Christian lands

Against all scathe of all conspiracies
Made on her party; while such reme-

dies' ends As physic states with bloodshedding, to

cure
Danger by death, bring fresh calami
ties

Far oftener forth than the old are healed of them

Which so men thought to medicine. To

From that red-handed way of rule, and

Justice no higher than mercy sits beside, Is the first mean of kings' prosperity That would reign long; nor will my lord

believe

Your highness could put off yourself so much

As to reverse and tread upon the law That you thus long have kept and honorably:

But should this perilous purpose hold

right on.

I am bounden by my charge to say, the

Will not regard as liable to your laws A queen's imperial person, nor will hold Her death as but the general wrong of kings,

And no more his than as his brethren's

But as his own and special injury done, More than to these injurious. Elizabeth. Doth your lord

Bid you speak thus?

Bellièvre. Ay, madam: from his mouth

Had I command what speech to use. Elizabeth. You have done

Better to speak than he to send it. Sir, You shall not presently depart this land As one denied of mere discourtesy.

I will return an envoy of mine own To speak for me at Paris with the king. You shall bear back a letter from my

And give your lord assurance, having seen,

I cannot be so frighted with men's

That they shall not much rather move my mind

To quicken than to slack the righteous

Which none must think by menace to put back,

Or daunt it with defiance. Sirs, good I were as one belated with false lights

If I should think to steer my darkglin way

By twilight furtherance of their wiles and words.

Think you, my lords, France yet would have her live?

Burghley. If there be other than the apparent end

Hid in this mission to your majesty, Mine envoys can by no means fathom

Who deal for me at Paris: fear of

Spain Lays double hand as 'twere upon the

king,

Lest by removal of the queen of Scots A way be made for peril in the claim More potent then of Philip; and if

there come

From his Farnese note of enterprise Or danger this way tending, France will

Cleave to your friendship though his sister die.

Elizabeth. So, in your mind, this halfsouled brother would

Steer any way that might keep safe his sail

Against a southern wind, which here, he thinks,

Her death might strengthen from the north again

To blow against him off our subject straits.

Made servile then and Spanish? Yet perchance

There swells behind our seas a heart too high

To bow more easily down, and bring this land

More humbly to such handling, than their waves

Bow down to ships of strangers, or their

To breath of any lord on earth but God. What thinks our cousin?

Hunsdon. That if Spain or France Or both be stronger than the heart in

Which beats to battle ere they menace,

why, [Exeunt Ambassadors. | In God's name, let them rise and make

their prey

Of what was England; but if neither be,—

The smooth-cheeked French man-harlot, nor that hand

Which holp to light Rome's fires with English limbs,—

Let us not keep, to make their weakness strong,

A pestilence here alive in England, which

Gives force to their faint enmities, and burns

Half the heart out of loyal trust and hope With heat that kindles treason.

Elizabeth. By this light,

I have heard worse counsel from a wise man's tongue

Than this clear note of forthright soldiership.

How say you, Dudley, to it? Leicester. Madam, ere this

You have had my mind upon the matter,

But late from Holland, that no public stroke

Should fall upon this princess, who may be

By privy death more happily removed Without impeach of majesty, nor leave A sign against your judgment, to call down

Blame of strange kings for wrong to kingship wrought

Though right were done to justice. Elizabeth. Of your love

Etizabeth. Of your love

We know it is that comes this counsel;

Had we such friends of all our servants, need

Our mind be now distraught with dangerous doubts

That find no screen from dangers. Yet meseems

One doubt stands now removed, if doubt there were

Of aught from Scotland ever: Walsingham,

You should have there intelligence whereof

To make these lords with us partakers. Walsingham. Nay,

Madam, no more than from a trustless hand

Protest and promise: of those twain that come

Hot on these Frenchmen's heels in embassy,

He that in counsel on this cause was late

One with my lord of Leicester now, to

By draught of secret death this queen away,

Bears charge to say as these gone hence have said

In open audience, but by personal note Hath given me this to know, that howsoe'er

His king indeed desire her life be spared, Much may be wrought upon him, would your grace

More richly line his ragged wants with gold,

And by full utterance of your parlia ment

Approve him heir in England. Elizabeth. Ay! no more?

God's blood! what grace is proffered us at need,

And on what mild conditions! Say I will not

Redeem such perils at so dear a price, Shall not our pensioner too join hands with France,

And pay my gold with iron barter back At edge of sword he dares not look upon,

They tell us, for the scathe and scare he took

Even in this woman's womb when shot and steel

Undid the manhood in his veins unborn, And left his tongue's threats handless?

Walsingham. Men there be,

Your majesty must think, who bear but ill,

For pride of country and high-heartedness.

To see the king they serve your servant

That not his mother's life and once their queen's

Being at such point of peril can enforce One warlike word of his, for chance of

wai

Conditional against you. Word came late

From Edinburgh, that there the citizens With hoot and hiss had bayed him through the streets

As he went heartless by; of whom they

had heard

This published saying, that in his personal mind

The blood of kindred or affinity

So much not binds us as the friendship pledged

To them that are not of our blood: and this

Stands clear for certain, that no breath of war

Shall breathe from him against us though she die,

Except his titular claim be reft from him On our succession; and that all his mind

Is but to reign unpartnered with a power

Which should weigh down that half his

kingdom's weight Left to his hand's share nominally in

hold. And for his mother, this would he desire.

That she were kept from this day to her death

Close prisoner in one chamber, never

To speak with man or woman; and hereon

That proclamation should be made of

As of one subject formally declared To the English law whereby, if she offend

Again with iterance of conspiracy, She shall not as a queen again be tried, But as your vassal and a private head Live liable to the doom and stroke of

death. Elizabeth. She is bounden to him as he long since to her,

Who would have given his kingdom up at least

To his dead father's slayer; in whose red hand

How safe had lain his life too, doubt may guess,

Which yet kept dark her purpose then on him.

Dark now no more to us-ward. Think you then

That they belie him, whose suspicion saith

His ear and heart are yet inclined to Spain,

If from that brother-in-law that was of ours,

And would have been our bridegroom, he may win

Help of strange gold and foreign soldiership,

With Scottish furtherance of those Catholic lords

Who are stronger-spirited in their faith than ours,

Being harried more of heretics, as they

Than these within our borders, to root

The creed there stablished now, and do to death

Its ministers, with all the lords their friends,

Lay hands on all strong places there, and rule

As prince upon their party? since he fain

From ours would be divided, and cast

His lot with Rome against us too, from these

Might he but earn assurance of their faith,

Revolting from his own. May these things be More than mere muttering breath of

trustless lies, And half his heart yet hover toward our

side

For all such hope or purpose?

Walsingham. Of his heart

We know not, madam, surely; nor doth he

Who follows fast on their first envoy

And writes to excuse him of his message here

On her behalf apparent, but in sooth Aimed otherwise; the Master I mean

of Gray,

Who swears me here by letter, if he be not

True to the queen of England, he is content

To have his head fall on a scaffold: saying,

To put from him this charge of embassy

Had been his ruin, but the meaning of

Is modest and not menacing: whereto If you will yield not yet to spare the

So near its forfeit now, he thinks it well

You should be pleased by some commission given

To stay by the way his comrade and himself.

Or bid them back.

Elizabeth. What man is this, then,

With such a knave to fellow? Walsingham. No such knave,

But still your prisoner's friend of old time found. -

Sir Robert Melville.

Elizabeth. And an honest man As faith might wish her servants; but

what pledge Will these produce me for security

That I may spare this dangerous life, and live

Unscathed of after practice? Walsingham. As I think,

The king's self and his whole nobility Will be her personal pledges; and her

If England yield her to his hand in charge.

On no less strait a bond will undertake For her safe keeping.

Elizabeth. That were even to arm With double power mine adversary,

and make him The stronger by my hand to do me

hurt — Were he mine adversary indeed: which

I will not hold him. Let them find a

For me to live unhurt, and save her life,

It shall well please me. Say this king of Scots

Himself would give his own inheritance

Pretended in succession, if but once

Her hand were found, or any friend's of

Again put forth upon me for her sake, Why, haply so might hearts be satisfied Of lords and commons then to let her live.

But this I doubt he had rather take her

Himself than yield up to us for pledge: and less. These men shall know of me, I will

not take

In price of her redemption: which were else,

And haply may in no wise not be held, To this my loyal land and mine own

A deadlier stroke and blast of sound more dire

Than noise of fleets invasive. Walsingham. Surely so

Would all hearts hold it, madam, in that land That are not enemies of the land and

yours; For ere the doom had been proclaimed

an hour Which gave to death your main foe's

head and theirs, Yourself have heard what fire of joy brake forth

From all your people; how their church-towers all

Rang in with jubilant acclaim of bells The day that bore such tidings, and the night

That laughed aloud with lightning of their joy

And thundered round its triumph: twice twelve hours

This tempest of thanksgiving roared and shone

Sheer from the Solway's to the Chan-

nel's foam With light as from one festal-flaming

hearth And sound as of one trumpet; not a tongue

But praised God for it, or heart that leapt not up,

Save of your traitors and their coun-

try's: these

Withered at heart and shrank their heads in close,
As though the bright sun's were a bas-

ilisk's eye,

And light, that gave all others comfort, flame

And smoke to theirs of hell's own darkness, whence

Such eyes were blinded or put out with fire.

Elizabeth. Yea, I myself, I mind me, might not sleep

Those twice twelve hours thou speak'st of. By God's light,

Be it most in love of me or fear of her I know not, but my people seems in

sooth

Hot and an hungered on this trail of hers:

Nor is it a people bloody-minded, used To lap the life up of an enemy's vein

Who bleeds to death unweaponed: our good hounds

Will course a quarry soldier-like in war, But rage not hangman-like upon the

To flesh their fangs on limbs that strive not: yet

Their hearts are hotter on this course than mine,

Which most was deadliest aimed at. Walsingham. Even for that

How should not theirs be hot as fire from hell

To burn your danger up, and slay that soul

Alive that seeks it? Thinks your majesty

There beats a heart where treason hath not turned

All English blood to poison, which would feel

No deadlier pang of dread more deathful to it

To hear of yours endangered than to

A sword against its own life bent, or know

Death imminent as darkness overhead

That takes the noon from one man's darkening eye

As must your death from all this people's? You

Are very England: in your light of life This living land of yours walks only safe,

And all this breathing people with your breath

Breathes unenslaved, and draws at each

Freedom: your eye is light of theirs, your word

As God's to comfort England, whose whole soul

Is made with yours one, and her witness you

That Rome or hell shall take not hold on her

Again till God be wroth with us so much

As to reclaim for heaven the star that yet

Lights all your land that looks on it, and gives

Assurance higher than danger dares assail
Save in this lady's name and service

who
Must now from you take judgment.

Elizabeth. Must! by God,

I know not *must* but as a word of mine, My tongue's and not mine ear's familiar. Sirs,

Content yourselves to know this much of us,

Or having known remember, that we sent

The lord of Buckhurst and our servant
Beale

To acquaint this queen our prisoner with the doom

Confirmed on second trial against her; saving

Her word can weigh not down the weightier guilt

Approved upon her, and by parliament Since fortified with sentence. Yea, my lords.

Ye should forget not how by message

I bade her know of me with what strong force (A strenuous and invincible argument am urged to hold no more in such delay

The process of her execution, being

The seed-plot of these late conspiracies, Their author and chief motive; and am told

That if I yield not, mine the guilt must be

In God's and in the whole world's suffering sight

Of all the miseries and calamities

To ensue on my refusal: whence, albeit I know not yet how God shall please to incline

My heart on that behalf, I have thought

it meet In conscience yet that she should be

forewarned, That so she might bethink her of her

Sins
Done both toward God offensive and

And pray for grace to be true penitent For all these faults: which, had the

main fault reached No farther than mine own poor person,

God Stands witness with what truth my heart

protests
I freely would have pardoned. She to

Makes bitter answer as of desperate heart.

All we may wreak our worst upon her; whom

Having to death condemned, we may

Our wicked work, and God in paradise With just atonement shall requite her.

Ye see is all the pardon she will ask, Being only, and even as 'twere with prayer, desired

To crave of us forgiveness; and there-

Being by Lord Buckhurst charged on this point home,

That by her mean the Catholics here had learnt

To hold her for their sovereign, — on which cause

Nor my religion nor myself might live

Uncharged with danger while her life should last,—

She answering gives God thanks aloud to be

Held of so great account upon his side, And in God's cause and in the Church of God's

Rejoicingly makes offering of her life; Which I, God knows how unrejoicingly, Can scarce, ye tell me, choose but take, or yield

At least for you to take it. Yet, being told

It is not for religion she must die, But for a plot by compass of her own Laid to dethrone me and destroy, she

Again this answer barbed with mockery back, —

She was not so presumptuous born, to aspire

To two such ends yet ever: yea, so far She dwelt from such desire removed in heart,

She would not have me suffer by her will

The fillip of a finger; though herself Be persecuted even as David once, And her mishap be that she cannot so Fly by the window forth as David:

whence

It seems she likens us to Saul, and looks Haply to see us as on Mount Gilboa fallen.

Where yet, for all the shooters on her side,

Our shield shall be not vilely cast away, As of one unanointed. Yet, my lords, If England might but by my death attain

A state more flourishing with a better prince,

Gladly would I lay down my life; who have

No care save only for my people's sake To keep it: for myself, in all the world I see no great cause why for all this coil I should be fond to live or fear to die. If I should say unto you that I mean

To grant not your petition, by my faith, More should I so say haply than I mean: Or should I say I mean to grant it, this Were, as I think, to tell you of my mind More than is fit for you to know: and thus

I must for all petitionary prayer Deliver you an answer answerless.

Yet will I pray God lighten my dark mind.

That being illumined it may thence fore-

What for his church and all this com-

May most be profitable: and this once known,

My hand shall halt not long behind his will.

#### Scene II. - Fotheringay

SIR AMYAS PAULET and SIR DREW DRURY.

Paulet. I never gave God heartier thanks than these

I give to have you partner of my charge Now most of all, these letters being to

No less designed than me, and you in heart

One with mine own upon them. Certainly,

When I put hand to pen this morning

That master Davison by mine evidence Might note what sore disquietudes I

To increase my griefs before of body and mind,

I looked for no such word to cut off mine

As these to us both of Walsingham's and his.

Would rather yet I had cause to still complain

Of those unanswered letters two months past,

Than thus be certified of such intents
As God best knoweth I never sought to
know.

Or search out secret causes: though to hear

Nothing at all did breed, as I confessed, In me some hard conceits against myself,

I had rather yet rest ignorant than ashamed

Of such ungracious knowledge. This shall be

Fruit as I think of dread wrought on the queen

By those seditious rumors whose report Blows fear among the people lest our charge

Escape our trust, or, as they term it now, Be taken away, — such apprehensive tongues

So phrase it, — and her freedom strike men's hearts

More deep than all these flying fears that say

London is fired of Papists, or the Scots Have crossed in arms the Border, or the north

Is risen again rebellious, or the Guise
Is disembarked in Sussex, or that now
In Milford Haven rides a Spanish
fleet.—

All which, albeit but footless floating lies,

May all too easily smite and work too far

Even on the heart most royal in the world

That ever was a woman's.

Drury. Good my friend, These noises come without a thunder-

bolt In such dense air of dusk expectancy As all this land lies under; nor will

Doubt or think much to say of those

reports,
They are broached and vented of men's credulous mouths

Whose ears have caught them from such lips as meant

Merely to strike more terror in the queen,

And wring that warrant from her hovering hand

Which falters yet and flutters on her lip While the hand hangs and trembles half advanced

Upon that sentence which, the treasurer said,

Should well ere this have spoken, see ing it was

More than a full month old and four days more

When he so looked to hear the word of

Which yet lies sealed of silence.

Paulet. Will you say,

Or any as wise and loyal, say or think It was but for a show, to scare men's wits,

They have raised this hue and cry upon

her flight

Supposed from hence, to waken Exeter With noise from Honiton and Sampfield spread

Of proclamation to detain all ships,

And lay all highways for her day and night,

And send like precepts out four manner

of ways

From town to town, to make in readi-

Their armor and artillery, with all speed, On pain of death, for London by report Was set on fire? though, God be therefore praised,

We know this is not, yet the noise hereof Were surely not to be neglected, see-There is, meseems, indeed no readier

way

To levy forces for the achieving that Which so these lewd reporters feign to

*Drury*. Why, in such mighty matters

and such mists

Wise men may think what hardly fools would say,

And eyes get glimpse of more than sight hath leave

To give commission for the babbling tongue

Aloud to cry they have seen. This noise that was

Upon one Arden's flight, a traitor, whence

Fear flew last week all round us, gave but note

How lightly may men's minds take fire, and words

Take wing that have no feet to fare upon

More solid than a shadow. Paulet. Nay, he was

Escaped indeed: and every day thus brings

Forth its new mischief; as this last month did

Those treasons of the French ambas

Designed against our mistress which God's grace

Laid by the knave's mean bare to whom they sought

For one to slay her, and of the Pope's hand earn Ten thousand blood-incrusted crowns a

To his most hellish hire. You will not

This too was merely fraud or vision

wrought By fear or cloudy falsehood?

Drury. I will say

No more or surelier than I know: and this

I know not thoroughly to the core of truth

Or heart of falsehood in it. A man may

Merely, or trim some bald lean truth with lies, Or patch bare falsehood with some tat-

ter of truth, And each of these pass current: but of

Which likeliest may this man's tale be who gave

Word of his own temptation by these French

To hire them such a murderer, and avowed

He held it godly cunning to comply,

And bring this envoy's secretary to sight Of one clapped up for debts in New-

gate, who Being thence released might readily, as

he said, Even by such means as once this lady's

lord Was made away with, make the queen

awav With powder fired beneath her bed-

why, this, Good sooth, I guess not; but I doubt

the man

To be more liar than fool, and yet, God

More fool than traitor; most of all in-

To conjure coin forth of the Frenchman's purse

With tricks of mere effontery: thus at least

We know did Walsingham esteem of

And if by Davison held of more account.

Or merely found more serviceable, and made

A mean to tether up those quick French tongues

From threat or pleading for this prisoner's life.

I cannot tell, and care not. Though the queen

Hath stayed this envoy's secretary from flight

Forth of the kingdom, and committed him

To ward within the Tower while Châteauneuf

Himself should come before a council

At my lord treasurer's, where being thus accused

At first he cared not to confront the

But stood upon his office, and the charge

Of his king's honor and prerogative — Then bade bring forth the knave, who being brought forth

Outfaced him with insistence front to

And took the record of this whole tale's

Upon his soul's damnation, challenging

Frenchman's answer in denial T'he hereof.

That of his own mouth had this witness

Traitorously tempted, and by personal

Directly drawn to treason: which awhile

Struck dumb the ambassador as amazed with wrath,

moved.

He made avewal this fellow some while

Had given his secretary to wit there la One bound in Newgate who being thence released

Would take the queen's death on hi hand: whereto

Answering, he bade the knave avoic his house

On pain, if once their ways should cross, to be

Sent bound before the council: who replied

He had done foul wrong to take no further note,

But being made privy to this damned device

Keep close its perilous knowledge; whence the queen

Might well complain against him; and hereon

They fell to wrangling on this cause, that he

Professed himself to no man answer-

For declaration or for secret held

Save his own master: so that now is

Sir William Wade to Paris, not with charge

To let the king there know this queen shall live,

But to require the ambassador's recall, And swift delivery of our traitors there To present justice: yet may no man say, For all these half-faced scares and policies.

Here was more sooth than seeming.

Paulet. Why, these crafts Were shameful then as fear's most

shameful self, If thus your wit read them aright; and

Should for our souls and lives alike do

To jeopard them on such men's surety

given As make no more account of simple

Than true men make of liars: and these are they,

Till presently, the accuser being re- Our friends and masters, that rebuke us both

By speech late uttered of her majesty For lack of zeal in service and of care She looked for at our hands, in that we have not

In all this time, unprompted, of ourselves

Found out some way to cut this queen's life off.

Seeing how great peril, while her enemy lives,

She is hourly subject unto; saying, she notes, Besides a kind of lack of love to her,

Herein we have not that particular

Forsooth of our own safeties, or indeed Of the faith rather and the general good,

That politic reason bids; especially, Having so strong a warrant and such

ground

For satisfaction of our consciences To Godward, and discharge of credit

And reputation toward the world, as is That oath whereby we stand associated To prosecute inexorably to death

Both with our joint and our particular force

All by whose hand and all on whose behalf

Our sovereign's life is struck at: as by proof

Stands charged upon our prisoner. So they write,

As though the queen's own will had warranted

The words that by her will's authority Were blotted from the bond, whereby that head .

Was doomed on whose behoof her life should be

By treason threatened: for she would not have

Aught pass which grieved her subjects' consciences,

She said, or might abide not openly The vihole world's view: nor would she

any one Were punished for another's fault: and

Cut off the plea whereon she now desires

That we should dip our secret hands in blood With no direction given of her own

mouth

So to pursue that dangerous head to death

By whose assent her life were sought: for this

Stands fixed for only warrant of such deed. And this we have not, but her work

instead She takes it most unkindly toward her

That men professing toward her loyally That love that we do should in any sort,

For lack of our own duty's full discharge,

Cast upon her the burden, knowing as

Her slowness to shed blood, much more of one

So near herself in blood as is this queen,

And one with her in sex and quality. And these respects, they find, or so profess,

Do greatly trouble her: who hath sundry times

Protested, they assure us, earnestly, That if regard of her good subjects' risk

Did not more move her than the personal fear

Of proper peril to her, she never would Be drawn to assent unto this bloodshedding:

And so to our good judgments they

These speeches they thought meet to acquaint us with

As passed but lately from her majesty, And to God's guard commend us: which God knows

We should much more need than deserve of him

Should we give ear to this, and as they

Make heretics of these papers; which three times

You see how Davison hath enforced on us:

But they shall taste no fire for me, nor

Back to his hands till copies writ of

Lie safe in mine for sons of mine to keep

In witness how their father dealt herein.

Drury. You have done the wiselier:
and what word soe'er

Shall bid them know your mind, I am well assured

It well may speak for me too.

Paulet. Thus it shall:

That having here his letters in my hands,

I would not fail, according to his charge,

To send back answer with all possible

To send back answer with all possible speed

Which shall deliver unto him my great grief

And bitterness of mind, in that I am So much unhappy as I hold myself To have lived to look on this unhappy

day,
When I by plain direction am required

From my most gracious sovereign's mouth to do

An act which God forbiddeth, and the law.

Hers are my goods and livings, and my life,

Held at her disposition, and myself
Am ready so to lose them this next
day

If it shall please her so, acknowledging I hold them of her mere goodwill, and do not

Desire them to enjoy them but so long As her great grace gives leave: but God forbid

That I should make for any grace of

So foul a shipwreck of my conscience, or

Leave ever to my poor posterity

So great a blot, as privily to shed blood With neither law nor warrant. So, in trust

That she, of her accustomed elemency, Will take my dutiful answer in good part,

By his good mediation, as returned

From one who never will be less in love,

Honor, obedience, duty to his queen, Than any Christian subject living, thus To God's grace I commit him

To God's grace I commit him.

Drury. Though I doubt

She haply shall be much more wroth hereat

Than lately she was gracious, when she bade

God treblefold reward you for your charge

So well discharged, saluting you by name

Most faithful and most careful, you shall do

Most like a wise man loyally to write But such good words as these, whereto myself

Subscribe in heart: though being not

(Albeit to both seem these late letters meant)

Nor this directed to me, I forbear To make particular answer. And in-

Were danger less apparent in her life To the heart's life of all this living

I would this woman might not die at

By secret stroke nor open sentence.

Paulet. I

Will praise God's mercy most for this of all,

When I shall see the murderous cause removed

Of its most mortal peril: nor desire A guerdon ampler from the queen we

serve,
Besides her commendations of my faith
For spotless actions and for safe regards,

Than to see judgment on her enemy done:

Which were for me that recompense

indeed Whereof she writes as one not given

to all,
But for such merit reserved to crown its

Above all common service: nor save

Could any treasure's promise in the world

So ease those travails and rejoice this

That hers too much takes thought of, as to read

Her charge to carry for her sake in it This most just thought, that she can balance not

The value that her grace doth prize me

In any weight of judgment: yet it were A word to me more comfortable at heart Than these, though these most gracious, that should speak

Death to her death's contriver.

Drury. Nay, myself

Were fain to see this coil wound up, and her

Removed that makes it: yet such things will pluck

rd at men's hearts that think on them, and move

Compassion that such long strange years should find

So strange an end: nor shall men ever But she was born right royal; full of

It may be, and by circumstance or choice

Dved and defaced with bloody stains and black,

Unmerciful, unfaithful, but of heart So fiery high, so swift of spirit and clear, In extreme danger and pain so lifted up, So of all violent things inviolable, So large of courage, so superb of soul, So sheathed with iron mind invincible And arms unbreached of fireproof con-

By shame not shaken, fear or force or death,

stancy, -

Change, or all confluence of calami-

And so at her worst need beloved, and

still. Naked of help and honor when she seemed,

As other women would be, and of hope Stripped, still so of herself adorable By minds not always all ignobly mad Nor all made poisonous with false grain of faith.

She shall be a world's wonder to all

A deadly glory watched of marvelling

Not without praise, not without noble

And if without what she would never

Who had it never, - pity, - yet from

Quite without reverence and some kind of love

For that which was so royal. Yea, and

That at her prayer we here attend on

If, as I think, she have in mind to send

Aught written to the queen, what we may do

To further her desire shall on my part Gladly be done, so be it the grace she craves

Be naught akin to danger. Paulet. It shall be

The first of all, then, craved by her of man,

Or by man's service done her, that was found

So harmless ever.

Enter MARY STUART and MARY BEA-TON.

Mary Stuart. Sirs, in time past by I was desirous many times, ye know, To have written to your queen: but

since I have had Advertisement of my conviction, seeing I may not look for life, my soul is set On preparation for another world:

Yet none the less, not for desire of life, But for my conscience's discharge and

And for my last farewell, I have at

By you to send her a memorial writ

Of somewhat that concerns myself, when I

Shall presently be gone out of this world. And to remove from her, if such be there,

Suspicion of all danger in receipt

Of this poor paper that shall come from me.

Myself will take the assay of it, and so With mine own hands to yours deliver it.

Paulet. Will you not also, madam,

be content

To seal and close it in my presence up?

Mary Stuart. Sir, willingly; but I beseech your word

Pledged for its safe delivery to the

queen.

Paulet. I plight my faith it shall be sent to her.

Mary Stuart. This further promise I

desire, you will

Procure me from above certificate

It hath been there delivered.

Drury. This is more

Than we may stand so pledged for: in our power

It is to send, but far beyond our power, As being above our place, to promise

Certificate or warrant.

Mary Stuart. Yet I trust

Consideration may be had of me After my death, as one derived in blood From your queen's grandsire, with all mortal rites

According with that faith I have pro-

fessed

All my life-days as I was born therein. This is the sum of all mine askings:

Well might I take it in ill part of you To wish me seal my letter in your sight, Bewraying your hard opinion of me.

Paulet. This

Your own words well might put into my

That so beside my expectation made Proffer to take my first assay for me Of the outer part of it: for you must think

I was not ignorant that by sleight of craft There might be as great danger so con-

veyed

Within the letter as without, and thus I could not for ill thoughts of you be blamed,

Concurring with you in this jealousy: For had yourself not moved it of yourself

Sir Drew nor I had ever thought on it.

Mary Stuart. The occasion why 1 moved it was but this:

That having made my custom in time past

To send sometimes some tokens to your queen,

At one such time that I sent certain clothes

One standing by advised her cause my gifts

To be tried thoroughly ere she touched them; which

I have since observed, and taken order thus

With Nau, when last he tarried at the court,

To do the like to a fur-fringed counterpane

Which at that time I sent: and as for this,

Look what great danger lies between these leaves

That I dare take and handle in my hands,

And press against my face each part of

Held open thus, and either deadly side, Wherein your fear smells death sown privily.

Paulet. Madam, when so you charged your secretary

Her majesty was far from doubt, I think,

Or dream of such foul dealing; and I would

Suspicion since had found no just cause

And then things had not been as now they are.

Mary Stuart. But things are as they are, and here I stand

Convicted, and not knowing how many hours

I have to live yet.

Paulet. Madam, you shall live

As many hours as God shall please; but this

May be said truly, that you here have been

Convicted in most honorable sort And favorable.

Mary Stuart. What favor have I found?

Paulet. Your cause hath been examined scrupulously

By many our eldest nobles of this realm, Whereas by law you should but have been tried

By twelve men as a common person.

Mary Stuart. Nay,

Your noblemen must by their peers be

Paulet. All strangers of what quality

In matter of crime are only to be tried In other princes' territories by law That in that realm bears rule.

Mary Stuart. You have your laws: But other princes all will think of it As they see cause; and mine own son is

now

No more a child, but come to man's estate,

And he will think of these things bitterly.

Drury. Ingratitude, whate'er he think of them,

Is odious in all persons, but of all In mightiest personages most specially Most hateful: and it will not be denied But that the queen's grace greatly hath deserved

Both of yourself and of your son.

Mary Stuart. What boon

Shall I acknowledge? Being in bonds, I am set

Free from the world, and therefore am
I not
Afraid to speak; I have had the favor

here To have been kept prisoner now these

many years
Against my will and justice.

Paulet. Madam, this

Was a great favor, and without this grace

You had not lived to see these days.

Mary Stuart. How so?

Paulet. Seeing your own subjects did pursue you, and had

The best in your own country. Mary Stuart. That is true,

Because your Mildmay's ill persuasions first

Made me discharge my forces, and then caused

Mine enemies to burn my friends' main holds,

Castles and houses.

Paulet. Howsoe'er, it was

By great men of that country that the queen

Had earnest suit made to her to have vourself

Delivered to them, which her grace denied,

And to their great misliking. Drury. Seventeen years

She hath kept your life to save it; and whereas

She calls your highness sister, she hath dealt

In truth and deed most graciously with you

And sister like, in seeking to preserve Your life at once and honor.

Mary Stuart. Ay! wherein?

Drury. In that commission of your causes held

At York, which was at instance of your friends

Dissolved to save your honor.

Mary Stuart. No: the cause

Why that commission was dissolved indeed

Was that my friends could not be heard to inform

Against my loud accusers. Paulet. But your friend

The bishop's self of Ross, your very friend,

Hath written that this meeting was dismissed

All only in your favor; and his book Is extant: and this favor is but one Of many graces which her majesty

Hath for mere love extended to you.

Mary Stuart. This

Is one great favor, even to have kept me here

So many years against my will.

Paulet. It was

For your own safety, seeing your countrymen

Sought your destruction, and to that swift end

Required to have you yielded up to them,

As was before said.

Mary Stuart. Nay, then, I will speak.
I am not afraid. It was determined
here

That I should not depart; and when I

was

Demanded by my subjects, this I know, That my lord treasurer with his own close hand

Writ in a packet which by trustier

hands

Was intercepted, and to me conveyed, To the earl of Murray, that the devil was tied

Fast in a chain, and they could keep

her not,

But here she should be safely kept.

Drury. That earl

Was even as honorable a gentleman As I knew ever in that country bred.

Mary Stuart. One of the worst men of the world he was:

A foul adulterer, one of general lust, A spoiler and a murderer.

Drury. Six weeks long,

As I remember, here I saw him; where He bore him very gravely, and maintained

The reputation even on all men's

tongues

In all things of a noble gentleman: Nor have I heard him evil spoken of Till this time ever.

Mary Stuart. Yea, my rebels here
Are honest men, and by the queen
have been

Maintained.

Paulet. You greatly do forget your-

To charge her highness with so foul a fault,

Which you can never find ability

To prove on her.

Mary Stuart. What did she with the French,

I pray you, at Newhaven?

Paulet. It appears

You have conceived so hardly of the queen

My mistress, that you still inveterately Interpret all her actions to the worst, Not knowing the truth of all the cause; but yet

I dare assure you that her majesty

Had most just cause and righteous, in respect

As well of Calais as for other ends, To do the thing she did, and more to

have done,

Had it so pleased her to put forth her power.

And this is in you great unthankfulness After so many favors and so great,

Whereof you will acknowledge in no wise

The least of any; though her majesty Hath of her own grace merely saved your life,

To the utter discontentment of the best Your subjects once in open parliament, Who craved against you justice on the charge

Of civil law-breach and rebellion.

Mary Stuart. I

Know no such matter, but full well I know

Sir Francis Walsingham hath openly, Since his abiding last in Scotland, said That I should rue his entertainment

Paulet. Madam, you have not rued it, but have been

More honorably entertained than ever

Was any other crown's competitor
In any realm save only this: whereof
Some have been kept close prisoners,

other some Maimed and unnaturally disfigured,

some Murdered.

Mary Stuart. But I was no competitor:

All I required was in successive right To be reputed but as next the crown.

Paulet. Nay, madam, you went further, when you gave

The English arms and style, as though our queen

Had been but an usurper on your right.

Mary Stuart. My husband and my kinsmen did therein

What they thought good: I had naught to do with it.

Paulet. Why would you not then loyally renounce

Your claim herein pretended, but with

Condition, that you might be authorized Next heir apparent to the crown?

Mary Stuart. I have made

At sundry times thereon good proffers, which

Could never be accepted.

Paulet. Heretofore It hath been proved unto you presently,

That in the very instant even of all Your treaties and most friendlike offers, were

Some dangerous crafts discovered. Mary Stuart. You must think

I have some friends on earth; and if they have done

Any thing privily, what is that to me? Paulet. Madam, it was somewhat to you, and I would

For your own sake you had forborne it, that

After advertisement and conscience

Of Morgan's devilish practice, to have killed

A sacred queen, you yet would entertain

The murderer as your servant. Mary Stuart. I might do it

With as good right as ever did your queen

So entertain my rebels. Drury. Be advised:

This speech is very hard, and all the case

Here differs greatly.

Mary Stuart. Yea, let this then be: Ye cannot yet of my conviction say But I by partial judgment was con-

demned, And the commissioners knew my son could have

No right, were I convicted, and your queen

Could have no children of her womb; whereby

They might set up what man for king they would.

Paulet. This is in you too great forgetfulness

lords

With two so foul and horrible faults, as first

To take your life by partial doom from

And then bestow the kingdom where they liked.

Mary Stuart. Well, all is one to me: and for my part

I thank God I shall die without regret Of any thing that I have done alive.

Paulet, I would entreat you yet be sorry at least

For the great wrong and well-deserving grief

You have done the queen, my mistress. Mary Stuart. Nay, thereon

Let others answer for themselves: I have

Nothing to do with it. Have you borne in mind

Those matters of my moneys that we

Conferred upon together? Paulet. Madam, these

Are not forgotten.

Mary Stuart. Well it is if aught Be yet at all remembered for my good Have here my letter sealed and superscribed,

And so farewell - or even as here men may.

Exeunt PAULET and DRURY. Had I that old strength in my weary limbs

That in my heart yet fails not, fain would I

Fare forth if not fare better. Tired I am.

But not so lame in spirit I might not

Some comfort of the winter-wasted sun This bitter Christmas to me, though my feet

Were now no firmer nor more helpful found

Than when I went but in my chair abroad

Last weary June at Chartley. I can

And go now without help of either side,

Of honor and yourself, to charge these And bend my hand again, thou seest to write:

I did not well perchance in sight of these

To have made so much of this lame hand, which yet

God knows was grievous to me, and to-day

To make my letter up and superscribe And seal it with no outward show of

Before their face and inquisition; yet I care not much in player's wise piteously

To blind such eyes with feigning: though this Drew

Be gentler and more gracious than his mate.

And liker to be wrought on; but at last What need have I of men?

Mary Beaton. What then you may, I know not, seeing for all that was and is We are yet not at the last; but when

you had,
You have hardly failed to find more
help of them

And heartier service than more prosperous queens

Exact of expectation: when your need Was greater than your name or natural state.

And wage was none to look for but of death.

As though the expectancy thereof and hope
Were more than man's prosperities,

men have given Heart's thanks to have this gift of God

and you
For dear life's guerdon, even the trust
assured

To drink for you the bitterness of death.

Mary Stuart. Ay, one said once it
must be, — some one said

I must be perilous ever, and my love More deadly than my will was evil or good

Toward any of all these that through me should die:

I know not who, nor when one said it; but

I know too sure he lied not. Mary Beaton. No; I think

This was a seer indeed. I have heard of men

That under imminence of death grew strong

With mortal foresight, yet in life-days
past
Could see no feet before them no

Could see no foot before them, nor provide

For their own fate or fortune any thing Against one angry chance of accident Or passionate fault of their own loves or hates

That might to death betray them: such an one

Thus haply might have prophesied, and

No strength to save himself.

Mary Stuart. I know not: yet

Time was when I remembered.

Mary Beaton. It should be

No enemy's saying whom you remend ber not;

You are wont not to forget your ene mies; yet

The word rang sadder than a friend's

The word rang sadder than a friend's should fall
Save in some strange pass of the spirit

or flesh
For love's sake haply hurt to death.

Mary Stuart. It seems
Thy mind is bent to know the name of

That of myself I know not.

Mary Beaton, Nay, my mind

Has other thoughts to beat upon: for me

It may suffice to know the saying for true,

And never care who said it.

Mary Stuart. True? too sure,

God to mine heart's grief hath approved

it. Sec, Nor Scot nor Englishman that takes on him

The service of my sorrow, but partakes The sorrow of my service; man by

As that one said, they perish of me:

Were I a sword sent upon earth, or plague

Bred of aërial poison, I could be No deadlier where unwillingly I strike,

Who where I would can hurt not: Percy

By his own hand in prison, Howard by law:

These young men with strange torments done to death,

Who should have rid me and the world of her

That is our scourge, and to the Church of God

A pestilence that wastes it: all the north

Wears yet the scars engraven of civil steel

Since its last rising: nay, she saith but

Mine enemy, saying by these her servile tongues

I have brought upon her land mine own land's curse,

And a sword follows at my heel, and fire

Is kindled of mine eyeshot. And before,

Whom did I love that died not of it?
Whom

That I would save might I deliver, when

I had once but looked on him with love, or pledged

Friendship? I should have died, I think, long since,

That many might have died not, and this word

Had not been written of me nor fulfilled,

But perished in the saying, a prophecy
That took the prophet by the throat,
and slew —

As sure I think it slew him. Such a song

Might my poor servant slain before my face

Have sung before the stroke of violent death

Had fallen upon him there for my sake.

Mary Beaton. Ah!

You think so? this remembrance was it not

That hung and hovered in your mind but now,

Moved your heart backward all unwittingly

To some blind memory of the man long dead?

Mary Stuart. In sooth, I think my prophet should have been

avid.

Mary Beaton. You thought of him? Mary Stuart. An old sad thought: The moan of it was made long since,

and he

Not unremembered.

Mary Beaton. Nay, of him indeed Record was made, — a royal record:
whence

No marvel is it that you forgot not him.

Mary Stuart. I would forget no
friends nor enemies: these

More needs me now remember.
Think'st thou not

This woman hates me deadlier — or this queen

That is not woman — than myself could hate

Except I were as she in all things?
Then

I should love no such woman as am I
Much more than she may love me: yet
I am sure.

Or so near surety as all belief may be, She dare not slay me for her soul's sake; nay,

Though that were made as light of as a leaf

Storm-shaken, in such stormy winds of state

As blow between us like a blast of death,

For her throne's sake she durst not, which must be

Broken to build my scaffold. Yet, God wot,

Perchance a straw's weight now cast in by chance

Might weigh my life down in the scale her hand

Holds hardly straight for trembling: if she be

Woman at all, so tempered naturally
And with such spirit and sense as thou
and I.

Should I for wrath so far forget myself
As these men sometime charge me
that I do,

My tongue might strike my head off.
By this head

That yet I wear to swear by, if life be

Thankworthy, God might well be thanked for this

Of me or whoso loves me in the world, That I spake never half my heart out yet.

For any sore temptation of them all, To her or hers; nor ever put but once My heart upon my paper, writing plain The things I thought, heard, knew for truth, of her,

Believed or feigned - nay, feigned not to believe

Of her fierce follies fed with wrymouthed praise,

And that vain ravin of her sexless lust Which could not feed nor hide its hunger, curb

With patience nor allay with love the

That mocked itself as all mouths mocked it. Ha!

What might the reading of these truths have wrought

Within her maiden mind, what seed have sown.

Trow'st thou, in her sweet spirit, of revenge

Toward me that showed her queenship, in the glass

A subject's hand of hers had put in mine,

The likeness of it loathed and laughable

As they that worshipped it with words and signs

Beheld her and bemocked her?

Mary Beaton. Certainly,

I think that soul drew never breath alive

To whom this letter might seem pardonable

Which timely you forbore to send her.

Mary Stuart, Nay,

I doubt not I did well to keep it back —
And did not ill to write it; for God
knows

It was no small ease to my heart.

Mary Beaton. But say

I had not burnt it as you bade me burn, But kept it privily safe against a need That I might haply some time have of it?

Mary Stuart. What, to destroy me?

Mary Beaton. Hardly, sure, to save. Mary Stuart. Why shouldst thou think to bring me to my death?

Mary Beaton. Indeed, no man am I that love you; nor

Need I go therefore in such fear of you As of my mortal danger.

Mary Stuart. On my life,

(Long life or short, with gentle or violent end.

I know not, and would choose not, though I might

So take God's office on me) one that heard

Would swear thy speech had in it, and subtly mixed,

A savor as of menace, or a sound

As of an imminent ill or perilous sense Which was not in thy meaning.

Mary Beaton. No: in mine

There lurked no treason ever; nor have

Cause to think worse of me than loyally,

If proof may be believed on witness.

Mary Stuart. Sure,

I think I have not, nor I should not have:

Thy life has been the shadow cast of mine,

A present faith to serve my present need,
A foot behind my footsteps; as long
since
In those French dances that we trod,

and laughed

The blithe way through together. Thou couldst sing
Then, and a great while gone it is by

this
Since I heard song or music: I could

now

Find in my heart to hid thee as the

Find in my heart to bid thee, as the Jews

Were once bid sing in their captivity
One of their songs of Sion, sing me now,
If one thou knowest, for love of that
far time,

One of our songs of Paris.

Mary Beaton. Give me leave

A little to cast up some wandering words,

And gather back such memories as may beat

About my mind of such a song, and yet I think I might renew some note long dumb

That once your ear allowed of. — I did pray, [Aside.

Tempt me not, God: and by her mouth again

He tempts me—nay, but prompts me, being most just,

To know by trial if all remembrance be Dead as remorse or pity that in birth Died, and were childless in her: if she

quite
Forget that very swan-song of thy love,
My love that wast, my love that wouldst

not be,

Let God forget her now at last as I Remember: if she think but one soft thought,

Cast one poor word upon thee, God

thereby Shall surely bid me let her live: if none,

Shall surely bid me let her live: it none, I shoot that letter home, and sting her dead.

God strengthen me to sing but these words through,

Though I fall dumb at end forever. Now — [She sings.

Après tant de jours, après tant de pleurs, Soyez secourable à mon âme en peine. Voyez comme Avril fait l'amour aux

fleurs;
Dame d'amour, dame aux belles couleurs,

Dieu vous a fait belle, Amour vous fait

Rions, je l'en prie ; aimons, je le veux. Le temps fuit et rit et ne revient guère Pour baiser le bout de tes blonds cheveux, Pour baiser les cils, ta bouche et tes yeux ; L'amour n'a qu'un jour auprès de sa mère.

Mary Stuart. Nay, I should once have known that song, thou say'st,

And him that sang it and should now be dead:

Was it — but his rang sweeter — was it not

Remy Belleau?

Mary Beaton (My letter—here at heart!) [Aside.

I think it might be — were it better writ And courtlier phrased, with Latin spice cast in.

And a more tunable descant.

Mary Stuart. Ay; how sweet

Sang all the world about those stars that sang

With Ronsard for the strong mid star of all,

His bay-bound head all glorious with gray hairs,

Who sang my birth and bridal! When I think

Of those French years, I only seem to see

A light of swords and singing, only hear Laughter of love and lovely stress of lutes,

And in between the passion of them

Sound of swords crossing ever, as of feet

Dancing, and life and death still equally Blithe and bright-eyed from battle. Haply now

My sometime sister, mad Queen Madge, is grown

As grave as I should be, and wears at waist

No hearts of last year's lovers any more Enchased for jewels round her girdlestead,

But rather beads for penitence; yet I doubt

Time should not more abash her heart than mine,

Who live not heartless yet. These days like those

Have power but for a season given to do No more upon our spirits than they may,

And what they may we know not till it be

Done, and we need no more take thought of it,

As I no more of death or life to-day.

Mary Beaton. That shall you surely need not.

Mary Stuart. So I think,

Our keepers being departed; and by these,

Even by the uncourtlier as the gentler man,

I read as in a glass their queen's plain heart.

And that by her at last I shall not die.

Scene III. - Greenwich Palace. QUEEN ELIZABETH and DAVISON.

Flizabeth. Thou hast seen Lord Howard? I bade him send thee.

Davison. Madam.

But now he came upon me hard at hand, And by your gracious message bade me

Elizabeth. The day is fair as April: hast thou been

Abroad this morning? 'Tis no winter's

That makes these trees forget their nakedness,

And all the glittering ground, as 'twere in hope,

Breathe laughingly.

Davison. Indeed, the gracious air Had drawn me forth into the park, and thence

Comes my best speed to attend upon your grace.

Elizabeth. My grace is not so gracious as the sun

That graces thus the late distempered air;

And you should oftener use to walk abroad.

Sir, than your custom is: I would not

Good servants heedless of their natural health

To do me sickly service. It were strange

That one twice bound as woman and as queen To care for good men's lives and loyal-

Should prove herself toward either

dangerous.

Davison. That

Can be no part of any servant's fear Who lives for service of your majesty. Elizabeth. I would not have it be, -God else forbid! -

Who have so loyal servants as I hold All now that bide about me; for I will not

Think, though such villany once were in men's minds,

That twice among mine English gentle-

Shall hearts be found so foul as theirs who thought,

When I was horsed for hunting, to waylav

And shoot me through the back at unawares

With poisoned bullets: nor, thou knowest, would I,

When this was opened to me, take such

Ride so fenced round about with iron guard,

Or walk so warily as men counselled me For loval fear of what thereafter might More prosperously be plotted: nay,

God knows, I would not hold on such poor terms

my life, With such a charge upon it, as to breathe

In dread of death or treason till the day That they should stop my trembling breath, and ease

The piteous heart that panted like a slave's

Of all vile fear forever. So to live Were so much hatefuller than thus to

I do not think that man or woman draws Base breath of life the loathsomest on

Who by such purchase of perpetual fear And deathless doubt of all in trust of

Would shudderingly prolong it. Davison. Even too well

Your servants know that greatness of your heart

Which gives you yet unguarded to men's

eves; And were unworthier found to serve or

Than is the unworthiest of them, did not

Make all their own hearts hotter with

To be the bulwark or the price of yours Paid to redeem it from the arrest of death.

Elizabeth. So haply should they be whose hearts beat true

With loyal blood; but whoso says they

Is but a loving liar.

Davison. I trust your grace

Hath in your own heart no such doubt of them

As speaks in mockery through your lips. *Elizabeth*. By God,

I say much less than righteous truth might speak

Of their loud loves that ring with emptiness,

And hollow-throated lovalties whose

And hollow-throated loyalties whose heart

Is wind and clamorous promise. Ye desire,—

With all your souls ye swear that ye desire,—

The queen of Scots were happily removed,

And not a knave that loves me will put hand

To the enterprise ye look for only of me Who only would forbear it.

Davison. If your grace

Be minded yet it shall be done at all, The way that were most honorable and just

Were safest, sure, and best. Elizabeth. I dreamt last night

Our murderess there in hold had tasted death

By execution of the sentence done That was pronounced upon her; and the

So stung my heart with wrath to hear

That had I had a sword, — look to't, and 'ware! —

I had thrust it through thy body. Davison. God defend!

'Twas well I came not in your highness'
way

While the hot mood was on you. But indeed

I would know soothly if your mind be changed

From its late root of purpose. *Elizabeth*. No, by God;

But I were fain it could be somewise done,

And leave the blame not on me. And so much,

If there were love and honesty in one Whom I held faithful and exact of care, Should easily be performed; but here I find

This dainty fellow so precise a knave As will take all things dangerous on his tongue,

And nothing on his hand: hot-mouthed and large

In zeal to stuff mine ears with promises, But perjurous in performance: did he not

Set hand among you to the bond whereby

He is bound at utmost hazard of his life

To do me such a service? yet I could Have wrought as well without him, had I wist

Of this faint falsehood in his heart.
There is

That Wingfield whom thou wot'st of, would have done
With glad good will what I required of

With glad good-will what I required of him,

And made no Puritan mouths on't.

Davison. Madam, yet

Far better were it all should but be done

By line of law and judgment. Elizabeth. There be men

Wiser than thou that see this otherwise. Davison. All is not wisdom that of wise men comes,

Nor are all eyes that search the ways of state

Clear as a just man's conscience.

Elizabeth. Proverbs! ha?

Who made thee master of these sentences,

Prime tongue of ethics and philosophy?

Davison. An honest heart to serve your majesty;

Naught else nor subtler in its reach of

Than very simpleness of meaning.

Elizabeth. Nay, I do believe thee; heartily I do.

Did my lord admiral not desire thee bring

The warrant for her execution?

Davison. Ay,

Madam; here is it.

Elizabeth. I would it might not be,

Or being so just were yet not necessary.

Art thou not heartily sorry — wouldst thou not,

I say, be sad — to see me sign it?

Davison. Madam, I grieve at any soul's mishap that lives,

And specially for shipwreck of a life To you so near allied; but seeing this doom

Wrung forth from justice by necessity, I had rather guilt should bleed than innocence.

Elizabeth. When I shall sign, take thou this instantly

To the lord chancellor: see it straight be sealed

As quietly as he may, not saying a word.

That no man come to know it untimely:

Send it to the earls of Kent and Shrewsbury,

Who are here set down to see this justice done:

I would no more be troubled with this coil

Till all be through. But, for the place of doom,

The hall there of the castle, in my mind,

Were fitter than the court or open green.

And as thou goest betake thee on thy way
To Walsingham, where he lies sick at

home,
And let him know what hath of us

been done: Whereof the grief, I fear me, shall go

near
To kill his heart outright.

Davison. Your majesty

Hath yet not signed the warrant. Elizabeth. Ha! God's blood!

Art thou from tutor of philosophy late Grown counsellor too, and more than counsellor, thou

To appoint me where and what this hand of mine

Shall at thy beck obsequiously subscribe

And follow on thy finger? By God's death,

What if it please me now not sign at all?

This letter of my kinswoman's last writ

Hath more compulsion in it, and more power

To enforce my pity, than a thousand tongues

Dictating death against her in mine

Of mine own vassal subjects. Here
but now

She writes me she thanks God with all her heart

That it hath pleased him by the mean

of me To make an end of her life's pilgrim-

age,
Which hath been weary to her; and

doth not ask
To see its length drawn longer, having

Too much experience of its bitterness:
But only doth entreat me, since she
may

Look for no favor at their zealous hands

Who are first in councils of my miristry,
That only I muscle will grant har

That only I myself will grant her prayers;

Whereof the first is, since she cannot hope
For English burial with such Catholic

rites As here were used in time of the an-

cient kings, Mine ancestors and hers, and since the

tombs Lie violated in Scotland of her sires,

That so soon ever as her enemies Shall with her innocent blood be sati

Shall with her innocent blood be sattracted,

Her body by her servants may be

To some ground consecrated, there to be

Interred: and rather, she desires, in France,

Where sleep her honored mother's ashes; so

At length may her poor body find the rest Which living it has never known: thereto,

She prays me, from the fears she hath of those

To whose harsh hand I have abandoned her,

She may not secretly be done to death, But in her servants' sight and others', who

May witness her obedience kept and faith

To the true Church, and guard her memory safe

From slanders haply to be blown abroad

Concerning her by mouths of enemies: last,

She asks that her attendants, who so well

And faithfully through all her miseries

And faithfully through all her miseries past

Have served her, may go freely where they please,

And lose not those small legacies of hers

Which poverty can yet bequeath to them.

This she conjures me by the blood of

Christ,
Our kinship, and my grandsire's

memory,
Who was her father's grandsire and a

king,
And by the name of queen she bears

with her
Even to the death, that I will not refuse,

And that a word in mine own hand may thus

Assure her, who will then as she hath lived

Die mine affectionate sister and prisoner. See, Howe'er she have sinned, what heart

were mine, if this

Drew no tears from me: not the mean-

Drew no tears from me: not the meanest soul

That lives most miserable but with such words

Must needs draw down men's pity.

Davison. Sure it is,

This queen hath skill of writing: and her hand

Hath manifold eloquence with various voice

To express discourse of sirens or of snakes,

A mermaid's or a monster's, uttering best

All music or all malice. Here is come A letter writ long since of hers to you From Sheffield Castle, which for shame

She durst not or she would not thence despatch,

Sent secretly to me from Fotheringay, Not from her hand, but with her own hand writ,

So foul of import and malignity I durst not for your majesty's respect With its fierce infamies aftre from hell Offend your gracious eyesight; but because

Your justice by your mercy's ignorant hand

Hath her fair eyes put out, and walks now blind

Even by the pit's edge deathward, pardon me

If what you never should have seen be

shown
By hands that rather would take fire in hand

Than lay in yours this writing.

[Gives her a letter. Elizabeth. By this light,

Whate'er be here, thou hadst done presumptuously,

And Walsingham thy principal, to keep

Aught from mine eyes that being to me designed

Might even with most offence enlighten

Might even with most offence enlighten them.

Here is her hand, indeed; and she takes up [Reading. In gracious wise enough the charge imposed

By promise on her and desire of ours, How loath soe'er she be, regretfully

To bring such things in question of discourse,

Yet with no passion but sincerity,

As God shall witness her, declares to

What our good lady of Shrewsbury said to her

Touching ourself in terms ensuing: whereto

Answering, she chid this dame for such belief,

And reprehended for licentious tongue, To speak so lewdly of us; which her-

Believes not, knowing the woman's natural heart

An evil will as then to us-ward. Here She writes no more than I would well believe

Of her as of the countess. Ha! Davison. Your grace

Shall but defile and vex your eyes and heart

To read these villanies through.

Elizabeth. God's death, man! peace:
Thou wert not best incense me toward
thine own,

Whose eyes have been before me in them. What!

Was she not mad to write this? One that had

Your promise — lay with you times numberless —

All license and all privateness that may Be used of wife and husband! yea, of

And more dead men than shame remembers. *God* 

Shall stand her witness — with the devil of hell

For sponsor to her vows, whose spirit in her

Begot himself this issue. Ha! the duke

Nay, God shall give me patience—
and his knave,

And Hatton — God have mercy! nay, but hate,

Hate and constraint and rage have wrecked her wits,

And continence of life cut off from lust,

— This common stale of Scotland, that
has tried

The sins of three rank nations, and consumed

Their veins whose life she took not,—
Italy,

France that put half this poison in her blood,

And her own kingdom that being sick therewith

Vomited out on ours the venomous thing

Whose head we set not foot on; but may God

Make my fame fouler through the world than hers,

And ranker in men's record, if I spare The she-wolf that I saved, the womanbeast,

Wolf-woman — how the Latin rings we know,

And what lewd lair first reared her, and

whose hand Writ broad across the Louvre and Holy

Writ broad across the Louvre and Holyrood

Lupanar: but no brothel ever bred

Or breathed so rank a soul's infection, spawned

Or spat such foulness in God's face and man's,

Or festered in such falsehood as her breath

Strikes honor sick with, and the spirit of shame

Dead as her fang shall strike herself, and send The serpent that corruption calls her

soul
To vie strange venoms with the worm

of hell,

And make the face of darkness and the grave
Blush hotter with the fires wherein that

soul

Sinks deeper than damnation.

Davison. Let your grace

Think only that but now the thing is known

And self-discovered which too long your love

Too dangerously hath cherished; and forget

All but that end which yet remains for her.

That right by pity be not overcome.

Elizabeth. God pity so my soul as I do right,

And show me no more grace alive or dead

Than I do justice here. Give me again That warrant I put by, being foolish: yea,

Thy word spake sooth, — my soul's eyes were put out;

I could not see for pity. Thou didst

I am bounden to thee heartily — to cure My sight of this distemper, and my soul. Here in God's sight I set mine hand, who thought

Never to take this thing upon it, nor Do God so bitter service. Take this hence,

And let me see no word nor hear of her Till the sun see not such a soul alive.

## ACT V .- MARY STUART.

Scene I. — Mary's Chamber in Fotheringay Castle.

Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton.

Mary Stuart (sings).

O Lord my God,
I have trusted in thee;
O Jesu my dearest one,
Now set me free.
In prison's oppression,
In sorrow's obsession,
I weary for thee.
With sighing and crying
Bowed down as dying,
I adore thee, I implore thee, set me free!

Free are the dead: yet fain I would have had

Once, before all captivity find end, Some breath of freedom living. These that come,

I think, with no such message, must not find,

For all this lameness of my limbs, a heart

As maimed in me with sickness. Three years gone,

When last I parted from the earl marshal's charge,

I did not think to see his face again
Turned on me as his prisoner. Now his
wife

Will take no jealousy more to hear of it.

I trust, albeit we meet not as unfriends, If it be mortal news he brings me. Go, If I seem ready, as meseems I should, And well arrayed to bear myself indeed None otherwise than queenlike in their sight.

Bid them come in.

[Exit MARY BEATON.
I cannot tell at last

If it be fear or hope that should expect Death: I have had enough of hope, and fear

Was none of my familiars while I lived Such life as had more pleasant things to lose

Than death or life may now divide me from.

'Tis not so much to look upon the sun With eyes that may not lead us where we will,

And halt behind the footless flight of hope

With feet that may not follow; nor were aught

So much, of all things life may think to have,

That one not cowardly born should find

it worth

The purchase of so base a price as this,

To stand self-shamed as coward. I do not think
This is mine end that comes upon me;

but

but bad liefer far it were than were it not

I had liefer far it were than, were it not, That ever I should fear it.

Enter KENT, SHREWSBURY, BEALE, and Sheriff.

Sirs, good day: With such good heart as prisoners have, I bid

You and your message welcome. Kent. Madam, this

The secretary of the council here hath charge

To read as their commission. Mary Stuart. Let me hear

In as brief wise as may be seem the time. The purport of it.

Beale. Our commission here Given by the council under the great

Pronounces on your head for present doom

Death, by this written sentence. Mary Stuart. Ay, my lords?

May I believe this, and not hold myself Mocked as a child with shadows? In God's name,

Speak you, my lord of Shrewsbury: let

me know

If this be dream or waking.

Kent. Verily,

No dream it is, nor dreamers we that pray,

Madam, you meetly would prepare yourself

To stand before God's judgment presently.

Mary Sumi. I had rather so than ever stand again

Before the face of man's. Why speak not you,

To whom I speak, my lord earl marshal? Nay,

Look not so heavily: by my life, he stands

As one at point to weep. Why, good my lord.

To know that none may swear by Mary's

And hope again to find belief of man Upon so slight a warrant, should not

This trouble on your eyes: look up, and

The word you have for her that never

Less than your friend, and prisoner. Shrewsbury. None save this,

Which willingly I would not speak, I may:

That presently your time is come to die. Mary Stuart. Why, then, I am well content to leave a world

Wherein I am no more serviceable at

To God or man, and have therein so long

Endured so much affliction. All my life I have ever earnestly desired the love And friendship of your queen; have warned her oft

Of coming dangers; and have cherished long

The wish that I but once might speak with her

In plain-souled confidence, being well assured.

Had we but once met, there an end had

Of jealousies between us: but our foes, With equal wrong toward either, treacherously

Have kept us still in sunder; by whose craft

And crooked policy hath my sister's crown

Fallen in great peril, and myself have been

Imprisoned, and inveterately maligned, And here must now be murdered. But I know

That only for my faith's sake I must die, And this to know for truth is recompense

As large as all my sufferings. For the crime

Wherewith I am charged, upon this holy book

I lay mine hand for witness of my plea, I am wholly ignorant of it; and solemnly

Declare that never yet conspiracy

Devised against the queen my sister's life

Took instigation or assent from me.

Kent. You swear but on a popish Testament:

Such oaths are all as worthless as the book. Mary Stuart. I swear upon the book

wherein I trust: Would you give rather credit to mine

Sworn on your Scriptures that I trust

not in? Kent, Madam, I fain would have you

heartily

Renounce your superstition; toward which end

With us the godly dean of Peter borough,

Good Richard Fletcher, well approved for faith

Of God and of the queen, is hither

To proffer you his prayerful ministry.

Mary Stuart. If you, my lords, or he will pray for me,

I shall be thankful for your prayers;
but may not

With theirs that hold another faith mix mine.

I pray you, therefore, that mine almoner may

Have leave to attend on me, that from

his hands
I, having made confession, may receive

The sacrament.

Kent. We may not grant you this.

Mary Stuart. I shall not see my

chaplain ere I die?

But two months gone, this grace was

granted me By word expressly from your queen, to

have Again his ministration; and at last

In the utter hour and bitter strait of death,

Is this denied me?

Kent. Madam, for your soul

More meet it were to cast these mummeries out,

And bear Christ only in your heart, than serve

With ceremonies of ritual hand and tongue

His mere idolatrous likeness.

Mary Stuart. This were strange,

That I should bear him visible in my hand,

Or keep with lips and knees his titular rites,

And cast in heart no thought upon him. Nay,

Put me, I pray, to no more argument; But if this least thing be not granted,

Grant me to know the season of my death.

Shrewsbury. At eight by dawn tomorrow you must die.

Mary Stuart. So shall I hardly see the sun again.

By dawn to-morrow? meanest men condemned

Give not their lives' breath up so suddenly:

Howbeit, I had rather yield you thanks, who make Such brief end of the bitterness of death

For me who have borne such bitter length of life,

Than plead with protestation of appeal For half a piteous hour's remission;

Henceforward shall I be denied of man

Aught, who may never now crave aught again,

But whence is no denial. Yet shall this

Not easily be believed of men, nor find In foreign ears acceptance, that a queen Should be thrust out of life thus. Good my friend,

Bid my physician Gorion come to me:
I have to speak with him — sirs, with
your leave —

Of certain moneys due to me in France. What! shall I twice desire your leave, my lords,

To live these poor last hours of mine alive

At peace among my friends? I have much to do,

And little time wherein to do it is left.

Shrewsbury (to KENT apart). I pray
she may not mean worse than I

would Against herself ere morning.

Kent. Let not then

This French knave's drugs come near her, nor himself: We will take order for it.

Shrewsbury. Nay, this were but

To exasperate more her thwarted heart, and make

Despair more desperate than itself.
Pray God

She be not minded to compel us put Force at the last upon her of men's hands

To hale her violently to death, and make

Judgment look foul and fierce as mur der's face

With stain of strife and passion.

[Exeunt all but Mary Stuart and Mary Beaton.

Mary Stuart. So, my friend, The last of all our Maries are you left To-morrow. Strange has been my life, and now

Strange looks my death upon me: yet, albeit

Nor the hour nor manner of it be mine to choose,

Ours is it yet, and all men's in the world,

To make death welcome in what wise we will.

Bid you my chaplain, though he see me not,

Watch through the night, and pray for me: perchance,

When ere the sundawn they shall bring me forth,

I may behold him, and upon my knees Receive his blessing. Let our supper be

Served earlier in than wont was: whereunto

I bid my true poor servants here, to take

Farewell, and drink at parting to them all

The cup of my last kindness, in good hope

They shall stand alway constant in their faith,

And dwell in peace together: thereupon

What little store is left me will I share Among them, and between my girls divide

My wardrobe and my jewels severally, Reserving but the black robe and the red

That shall attire me for my death; and last

With mine own hand shall be my will writ out,

And all memorials more set down therein

That I would leave for legacies of love To my next kinsmen and my household folk.

And to the king my brother yet of France

Must I write briefly, but a word to say I am innocent of the charge whereon I

Now for my right's sake claimed upon this crown,

And our true faith's sake, but am barred from sight

Even of mine almoner here, though hard at hand;

And I would bid him take upon his charge

The keeping of my servants, as I think He shall not for compassionate shame refuse,

Albeit his life be softer than his heart; And in religion for a queen's soul pray That once was styled Most Christian, and is now

In the true faith about to die, deprived Of all her past possessions. But this most

And first behooves it, that the king of Spain

By Gorion's word of mouth receive my heart,

Who soon shall stand before him. Bid the leech

Come hither, and alone, to speak with me.

[Exit MARY BEATON.
She is dumb as death: yet never in her life

Hath she been quick of tongue. For all the rest,

Poor souls, how well they love me, all as well

I think I know; and one of them or twain

At least may surely see me to my death Ere twice the hours have changed again. Perchance

Love that can weep not would the gladlier die

For those it cannot weep on. Time wears thin:

They should not now play laggard:
nay, he comes,

The last that ever speaks alone with

Before my soul shall speak alone with God.

Enter GORION.

I have sent once more for you to no such end

As sick men for physicians: no strong drug

May put the death next morning twelve hours back

Whose twilight overshadows me, that

Nor sick nor medicinable. Let me

If I may lay the last of all my trust On you that ever shall be laid on man To prove him kind and loyal.

Gorion. So may God

Deal with me, madam, as I prove to

Faithful, though none but I were in the world

That you might trust beside.

Mary Stuart. With equal heart

Do I believe and thank you. I would send

To Paris for the ambassador from Spain

This letter with two diamonds, which your craft

For me must cover from men's thievish eyes,

Where they may be not looked for. Gorion. Easily

Within some molten drug may these be hid,

And faithfully by me conveyed to him.

Mary Stuart. The lesser of them

shall he keep in sign
Of my good friendship toward himself:

but this

In token to King Philip shall he give That for the truth I die, and dying commend

To him my friends and servants, Gilbert Curle,

His sister, and Jane Kennedy, who shall

To-night watch by me; and my ladies all

That have endured my prison: let him not

Forget from his good favor one of these

That I remember to him; Charles Arundel,

And either banished Paget; one whose heart

Was better toward my service than his hand,

Morgan; and of mine exiles for their faith,

The prelates first of Glasgow and of Ross;

And Liggons and Throgmorton, that have lost

For me their leave to live on English earth;

And Westmoreland, that lives now more forlorn

Than died that earl who rose for me with him.

These I beseech him favor for my sake Still: and forget not, if he come again To rule as king in England, one of them That were mine enemies here: the treasurer first,

And Leicester, Walsingham, and Huntingdon,

At Tutbury once my foe, fifteen years gone,

And Wade that spied upon me three years since,

And Paulet here my gaoler: set them down

For him to wreak wrath's utmost justice on.

In my revenge remembered. Though

Dead, let him not forsake his hope to reign

Upon this people: with my last breath left

I make this last prayer to him, that not the less He will maintain the invasion yet de-

He will maintain the invasion yet designed
Of us before on England: let him think,

It is God's quarrel, and on earth a cause Well worthy of his greatness; which being won,

Let him forget no man of these nor me. And now will I lie down, that four hours' sleep

May give me strength before I sleep again,

And need take never thought for waking more.

Scene II. — The Presence Chamber

SHREWSBURY, KENT, PAULET, DRURY, MELVILLE, and Attendants.

Kent. The stroke is past of eight. Shrewsbury. Not far, my lord.

Kent. What stays the provost and the sheriff yet

That went ere this to bring the prisoner forth? What! are her doors locked inwards?

Then perchance Our last night's auguries of some close

design

By death contrived of her self-slaughterous hand

To baffle death by justice hit but right The heart of her bad purpose.

Shrewsbury. Fear it not:

See where she comes, a queenlier thing

Than whom such thoughts take hold

Enter MARY STUART, led by two gentlemen and preceded by the Sheriff; MARY BEATON, BARBARA MOW-BRAY, and other ladies behind, who remain in the doorway.

Melville (kneeling to MARY). Woe am

Madam, that I must bear to Scotland back

Such tidings watered with such tears as these!

Mary Stuart. Weep not, good Melville: rather should your heart Rejoice that here an end is come at

Of Mary Stuart's long sorrows; for be sure

That all this world is only vanity.

And this record I pray you make of me, That a true woman to my faith I die, And true to Scotland and to France; but God

Forgive them that have long desired mine end,

And with false tongues have thirsted for my blood

As the hart thirsteth for the waterbrooks.

O God, who art truth, and the author of all truth,

Thou knowest the extreme recesses of my heart,

And how that I was willing all my days That England should with Scotland be fast friends.

Commend me to my son: tell him that I

Have nothing done to prejudice his rights

As king. And now, good Melville, fare thee well.

My lord of Kent, whence comes it that your charge

Hath bidden back my women there at door

Who fain to the end would bear me company?

Kent. Madam, this were not seemly nor discreet,

That these should so have leave to vex men's ears

With cries and loose lamentings: haply

They might in superstition seek to dip Their handkerchiefs for relics in your blood.

Mary Stuart. That will I pledge my word they shall not. Nay,

The queen would surely not deny me

The poor last thing that I shall ask on earth.

Even a far meaner person dying, I

She would not have so handled. Sir, you know

I am her cousin, of her grandsire's blood.

A queen of France by marriage, and by

Anointed queen of Scotland. My poor girls

Desire no more than but to see me

Shrewsbury. Madam, you have leave to elect of this your train

Two ladies with four men to go with

Mary Stuart. I choose from forth my Scottish following here

Jane Kennedy, with Elspeth Curle: of

Bourgoin and Gorion shall attend on me.

Gervais and Didier. - Come then, let us go.

[Exeunt: manent MARY BEATON and BARBARA MOWBRAY.

Barbara. I wist I was not worthy, though my child

It is that her own hands made Christian: but

I deemed she should have bid you go with her.

Alas! and would not all we die with

her?
Mary Beaton. Why, from the gallery
here at hand your eyes

May go with her along the hall beneath

Even to the scaffold; and I fain would

What fain I would not look on. Pray

you, then,
If you may bear to see it as those below,
Do me that sad good service of your

For mine to look upon it, and declare All that till all be done I will not see:

I pray you of your pity.

Barbara. Though mine heart

Break, it shall not for fear forsake the sight

That may be faithful yet in following her,

Nor yet for grief refuse your prayer, being fain

To give your love such bitter comfort, who

So long have never left her.

Mary Beaton. Till she die —

I have ever known I shall not till she die.

See you yet aught? if I hear spoken words,

My heart can better bear these pulses,

Unbearable, that rend it. Barbara. Yea, I see

Stand in mid hall the scaffold, black as death,

And black the block upon it; all around,

Against the throng a guard of halberdiers;

And the axe against the scaffold-rail reclined,

And two men masked on either hand beyond;

And hard behind the block a cushion

Black, as the chair behind it. Mary Beaton. When I saw Fallen on a scaffold once a young man's head,

Such things as these I saw not. Nay,
but on:

I know not that I spake; and toward

I knew not that I spake; and toward your ears

Indeed I spake not.

Barbara. All those faces change; She comes more royally than ever yet

Fell foot of man triumphant on this earth,

Imperial more than empire made her, born

Enthroned as queen sat never. Not a line

Stirs of her sovereign feature: like a bride

Brought home she mounts the scaffold; and her eyes

Sweep regal round the cirque beneath, and rest, Subsiding with a smile. She sits, and

they,
The doomsmen earls, beside her; at her

left The sheriff, and the clerk at hand on

high, Te read the warrant.

Mary Beaton. None stands there but knows

What things therein are writ against her: God

Knows what therein is writ not. God forgive

All!

Barbara. Not a face there breathes of all the throng

But is more moved than hers to hear this read,

Whose look alone is changed not. Mary Beaton. Once I knew

A face that changed not in as dire an hour,

More than the queen's face changes.
Hath he not

Ended?

Barbara. You cannot hear them speak below:

Come near, and hearken; bid not me repeat

All.

Mary Beaton. I beseech you — for I may not come.

Barbara. Now speaks Lord Shrewsbury but a word or twain;

And brieflier yet she answers, and

stands up

As though to kneel, and pray.

Mary Beaton. I too have prayed:

God hear at last her prayers not less than mine,

Which failed not, sure, of hearing.

Barbara. Now draws nigh

That heretic priest, and bows himself, and thrice

Strives, as a man that sleeps in pain, to speak,

Stammering: she waves him by, as one whose prayers

She knows may naught avail her; now she kneels,

And the earls rebuke her, and she answers not,

Kneeling. O Christ, whose likeness there engraved

She strikes against her bosom, hear her! Now

That priest lifts up his voice against her prayer,

Praying; and a voice all round goes up with his: But hers is lift up higher than climbs

their cry,
In the great psalms of penitence; and

now She prays aloud in English; for the

Pope
Our father, and his Church; and for

her son, And for the queen her murderess; and

that God May turn from England yet his wrath

And so forgives her enemies; and implores

High intercession of the saints with Christ,

Whom crucified she kisses on his cross,

And crossing now her breast — ah, heard you not?

Even as thine arms were spread upon the cross,

So make thy grace, O Jesus, wide for me, Receive me to thy mercy so, and so Forgive my sins. Mary Beaton. So be it, if so God please.

Is she not risen up yet?

Barbara. Yea, but mine eyes

Darken: because those deadly twain close masked

Draw nigh as men that crave forgiveness, which

Gently she grants; For now, she said, 1 hope

You shall end all my troubles. Now meseems

They would put hand upon her as to help,

And disarray her raiment; but she smiles—

Heard you not that? can you nor hear nor speak,

Poor heart, for pain? Truly, she said, my lords,

I never had such chamber-grooms before As these to wait on me.

Mary Beaton. An end, an end!
Barbara. Now come those twain upon
the scaffold up

Whom she preferred before us; and she lays

Her crucifix down, which now the headsman takes

Into his cursed hand, but being rebuked Puts back for shame that sacred spoil of hers.

And now they lift her veil up from her head

Softly, and softly draw the black robe off,

And all in red as of a funeral flame
She stands up statelier yet before them,
tall

And clothed as if with sunset; and she takes

From Elspeth's hand the crimson sleeves, and draws

Their covering on her arms: and now those twain

Burst out aloud in weeping; and she speaks—

Weep not: I promised for you. Now she kneels;

And Jane binds round a kerchief on her

And smiling last her heavenliest smile on earth,

She waves a blind hand toward them, with Farewell,

Farewell, to meet again; and they come down,

And leave her praying aloud, In thee, O Lord,

I put my trust. And now, that psalm being through,

She lays between the block and her soft neck

Her long white peerless hands up tenderly,

Which now the headsman draws again away,

But softly too. Now stir her lips again —

Into thine hands, O Lord, into thine hands, Lord, I commend my spirit. And now — But now,

Look you, not I, the last upon her. Mary Beaton. Ha!

He strikes awry: she stirs not. Nay, but now

He strikes aright, and ends it.

Barbara. Hark, a cry!
Voice below. So perish all found enemies of the queen!

Another Voice. Amen!
Mary Beaton. I heard that very cry go

up Far off long since to God, who answers

'ar off long since to God, who answer here.

## POEMS AND BALLADS.

## A LEAVE-TAKING.

LET us go hence, my songs: she will not hear;

Let us go hence together without fear. Keep silence now, for singing-time is over.

And over all old things and all things dear.

She loves not you nor me as all we love her:

Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear.

She would not hear.

Let us rise up and part: she will not know.

Let us go seaward as the great winds

Full of blown sand and foam. What help is there?

There is no help, for all these things are so,

And all the world is bitter as a tear.

And how these things are, though ye strove to show,

She would not know.

Let us go home and hence: she will not weep.

We gave love many dreams and days to keep.

Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not grow,

Saying, "If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle, and reap."

All is reaped now; no grass is left to

And we that sowed, though all we fell on sleep,

She would not weep.

Let us go hence and rest; she will not love.

She shall not hear us if we sing hereof,

Nor see love's ways, how sore they are and steep.

Come hence, let be, lie still; it is enough.

Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep; And, though she saw all heaven in flower above.

She would not love.

Let us give up, go down: she will not care.

Though all the stars made gold of all the air,

And the sea moving saw before it move

One moon-flower making all the foamflowers fair;

Though all those waves went over us, and drove

Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair. —

She would not care.

Let us go hence, go hence: she will not sec.

Sing all once more together; surely she,

She too, remembering days and words that were,

Will turn a little toward us, sighing; but we,

We are hence, we are gone, as though we had not been there.

Nay, and though all men seeing had pity on me,

She would not see.

## ITYLUS.

Swallow, my sister, O sister swallow, How can thine heart be full of the spring?

A thousand summers are over and

dead.

What hast thou found in the spring to follow?

What hast thou found in thine heart to sing?

What wilt thou do when the summer is shed?

O swallow, sister, O fair swift swallow, Why wilt thou fly after spring to the south,

The soft south whither thine heart

is set?

Shall not the grief of the old time follow?

Shall not the song thereof cleave to thy mouth?

Hast thou forgotten ere I forget?

Sister, my sister, O fleet sweet swallow, Thy way is long to the sun and the south;

But I, fulfilled of my heart's desire, Shedding my song upon height, upon hollow,

From tawny body and sweet small mouth

Feed the heart of the night with fire.

I the nightingale all spring through, O swallow, sister, O changing swallow,

All spring through till the spring be done,

Clothed with the light of the night on the dew,

Sing, while the hours and the wild birds follow,

Take flight and follow and find the sun.

Sister, my sister, O soft, light swallow, Though all things feast in the spring's guest-chamber,

How hast thou heart to be glad thereof yet?

For where thou fliest I shall not follow, Till life forget, and death remember, Till thou remember, and I forget.

Swallow, my sister, O singing swallow, I know not how thou hast heart to sing. Hast thou the heart? is it all past over?

Thy lord the summer is good to follow, And fair the feet of thy lover the spring;

But what wilt thou say to the spring thy lover?

O swallow, sister, O fleeting swallow, My heart in me is a molten ember, And over my head the waves have met.

But thou wouldst tarry, or I would fol low.

Could I forget, or thou remember, Couldst thou remember, and I forget.

O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow, The heart's division divideth us.

Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree; But mine goes forth, among sea-gulfs hollow,

To the place of the slaying of Itylus, The feast of Daulis, the Thracian sea.

O swallow, sister, O rapid swallow, I pray thee sing not a little space.

Are not the roofs and the lintels wet? The woven web that was plain to fol-

low,
The small slain body, the flower-like

Can I remember if thou forget?

O sister, sister, thy first-begotten!

The hands that cling and the feet that follow,

The voice of the child's blood crying yet,

Who hath remembered me? Who hath forgotten?

Thou hast forgotten, O summer swal-

low,
But the world shall end when I

forget.

## RONDEL.

THESE many years since we began to be, What have the gods done with us? what with me,

What with my love? They have shown me fates and fears,

Harsh springs, and fountains bitterer than the sea,

Grief a fixed star, and joy a vane that veers,

These many years.

With her, my love, with her have they done well?

But who shall answer for her? who shall

Sweet things or sad, such things as no man hears?

May no tears fall, if no tears ever fell, From eyes more dear to me than starriest spheres

These many years!

But if tears ever touched, for any grief, Those eyelids folded like a white-rose leaf,

Deep double shells wherethrough the eye-flower peers,

Let them weep once more only, sweet and brief,

Brief tears and bright, for one who gave her tears

These many years.

## A LITANY.

έν ούρανῷ φαεννὰς κρύψω παρ' ὑμίν αὐγὰς, μίας πρὸ νυκτὸς ἐπτὰ νύκτας ἔξετε, κ.τ.λ. Αnth. Sac.

#### FIRST ANTIPHONE.

ALL the bright lights of heaven
I will make dark over thee;
One night shall be as seven,
That its skirts may cover thee;
I will send on thy strong men a sword,
On thy remnant a rod:
Ye shall know that I am the Lord,
Saith the Lord God.

#### SECOND ANTIPHONE.

All the bright lights of heaven
Thou hast made dark over us;
One night has been as seven,
That its skirt might cover us;
Thou hast sent on our strong me

Thou hast sent on our strong men a sword,

On our remnant a rod:
We know that thou art the Lord,
O Lord our God!

#### THIRD ANTIPHONE.

As the tresses and wings of the wind Are scattered and shaken, I will scatter all them that have sinned: There shall none be taken:

As a sower that scattereth seed, So will I scatter them;

As one breaketh and shattereth a reed, I will break and shatter them.

#### FOURTH ANTIPHONE.

As the wings and the locks of the wind Are scattered and shaken,

Thou hast scattered all them that have sinned:

There was no man taken; As a sower that scattereth seed, So hast thou scattered us;

As one breaketh and shattereth a reed, Thou hast broken and shattered us.

#### FIFTH ANTIPHONE.

From all thy lovers that love thee, I God will sunder thee; I will make darkness above thee, And thick darkness under thee;

Before me goeth a light, Behind me a sword:

Shall a remnant find grace in my sight?
I am the Lord.

#### SIXTH ANTIPHONE.

From all our lovers that love us,
Thou God didst sunder us;
Thou madest darkness above us,
And thick darkness under us;
Thou hast kindled thy wrath for a light,

And made ready thy sword: Let a remnant find grace in thy sight, We beseech thee, O Lord!

#### SEVENTH ANTIPHONE.

Wilt thou bring fine gold for a payment For sins on this wise?
For the glittering of raiment,
And the shining of eyes,
For the painting of faces,
And the sundering of trust,

For the sins of thine high places And delight of thy lust?

For your high things ye shall have lowly,
Lamentation for song;
For, behold, I God am holy,
I the Lord am strong.
Ye shall seek me, and shall not reach me
Till the wine-press be trod;
In that hour ye shall turn, and beseech
me,
Saith the Lord God.

#### EIGHTH ANTIPHONE.

Not with fine gold for a payment, But with coin of sighs, But with rending of raiment, And with weeping of eyes, But with shame of stricken faces, And with strewing of dust, For the sin of stately places And lordship of lust;

With voices of men made lowly,
Made empty of song,
O Lord God most holy,
O God most strong,
We reach out hands to reach thee
Ere the wine-press be trod;
We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech
thee,
O Lord our God!

## NINTH ANTIPHONE.

In that hour thou shalt say to the night, Come down and cover us;
To the cloud on thy left and thy right,
Be thou spread over us.
A snare shall be as thy mother,
And a curse thy bride;
Thou shalt put her away, and another
Shall lie by thy side.

Nor lie down by night.
Would God it were dark! thou shalt say;
Would God it were light!
And the sight of thine eyes shall be made

Thou shalt neither rise up by day,

As the burning of fire; And thy soul shall be sorely afraid For thy soul's desire.

Ye whom your lords loved well,
Putting silver and gold on you,
The inevitable hell
Shall surely take hold on you;
Your gold shall be for a token,
Your staff for a rod;
With the breaking of bands ye are
broken,
Saith the Lord God.

#### TENTH ANTIPHONE.

In our sorrow we said to the night,
Fall down and cover us;
To the darkness at left and at right,
Be thou shed over us.
We had breaking of spirit to mother,
And cursing to bride;
And one was slain, and another
Stood up at our side.

We could not arise by day,
Nor lie down by night;
Thy sword was sharp in our way,
Thy word in our sight;
The delight of our eyelids was made
As the burning of fire,
And our souls became sorely afraid
For our soul's desire.

We whom the world loved well,
Laying silver and gold on us,
The kingdom of death and of hell
Riseth up to take hold on us;
Our gold is turned to a token,
Our staff to a rod:
Yet shalt thou bind them up that were
broken,
O Lord our God!

## A LAMENTATION.

T.

Who hath known the ways of time, Or trodden behind his feet? There is no such man among men. For chance overcomes him, or crime Changes; for all things sweet In time wax bitter again.

Who shall give sorrow enough, Or who the abundance of tears? Mine eyes are heavy with love,

And a sword gone thorough mine ears,
A sound like a sword and fire,
For pity, for great desire;

Who shall insure me thereof, Lest I die, being full of my fears?

Who hath known the ways and the wrath,

The sleepless spirit, the root
And blossom of evil will,
The divine device of a god?
Who shall behold it, or hath?

The twice-tongued prophets are mute,
The many speakers are still;
No foot has travelled or trod,

No hand has meted, his path. Man's fate is a blood-red fruit,

And the mighty gods have their fill And relax not the rein, or the rod.

Ye were mighty in heart from of old, Ye slew with the spear, and are slain. Keen after heat is the cold, Sore after summer is rain,

And melteth man to the bone.

As water he weareth away,

As a flower, as an hour in a day,

Fallen from laughter to moan.
But my spirit is shaken with fear
Lest an evil thing begin,

New-born, a spear for a spear, And one for another sin.

Or ever our tears began, It was known from of old and said;

One law for a living man, And another law for the dead

For these are fearful and sad, Vain, and things without breath; While he lives let a man be glad,

While he lives let a man be glad, For none hath joy of his death. 11.

Who hath known the pain, the old pain of earth,

Or all the travail of the sea, The many ways and waves, the birth Fruitless, the labor nothing worth?

Who hath known, who knoweth, O gods? not we.

There is none shall say he hath seen,
There is none he hath known.
Though he saith, Lo, a lord have I

been,

I have reaped and sown;
I have seen the desire of mine eyes,

The beginning of love, The season of kisses and sighs, And the end thereof.

I have known the ways of the sea,

All the perilous ways; Strange winds have spoken with me, And the tongues of strange days.

I have hewn the pine for ships;

Where steeds run arow, I have seen from their bridled lips Foam blown as the snow.

With snapping of chariot-poles
And with straining of oars
I have grazed in the race the goals,

In the storm the shores; As a greave is cleft with an arrow

At the joint of the knee,
I have cleft through the sea-straits

To the heart of the sea. When air was smitten in sunder, I have watched on high

The ways of the stars and the thunder

In the night of the sky;

Where the dark brings forth light as a flower,

As from lips that dissever; One abideth the space of an hour, One endureth forever.

Lo, what hath he seen or known Of the way and the wave

Unbeholden, unsailed-on, unsown, From the breast to the grave?

Or ever the stars were made, or skies, Grief was born, and the kinless night, Mother of gods without form or name.

And light is born out of heaven, and dies,

And one day knows not another's light:

But night is one, and her shape the same.

But dumb the goddesses underground Wait, and we hear not on earth if their feet

Rise, and the night wax loud with their wings;

Dumb, without word or shadow of sound:

And sift in scales, and winnow as wheat

Men's souls, and sorrow of manifold things.

#### III.

Nor less of grief than ours
The gods wrought long ago
To bruise men one by one;
But with the incessant hours
Fresh grief and greener woe
Spring, as the sudden sun
Year after year makes flowers;
And these die down and grow,
And the next year lacks none.

As these men sleep, have slept
The old heroes in time fled,
No dream-divided sleep;
And holier eyes have wept
Than ours, when on her dead
Gods have seen Thetis weep,
With heavenly hair far-swept
Back, heavenly hands out-spread
Round what she could not keep,

Could not one day withhold,
One night; and like as these
White ashes of no weight,
Held not his urn the cold
Ashes of Heracles?
For all things born, one gate
Opens,—no gate of gold;
Opens; and no man sees
Beyond the gods and fate.

## ANIMA ANCEPS.

TILL death have broken Sweet life's love-token, Till all be spoken That shall be said, What dost thou praying, O soul, and playing With song and saying, Things flown and fled? For this we know not -That fresh springs flow not And fresh griefs grow not When men are dead; When strange years cover Lover and lover, And joys are over, And tears are shed.

If one day's sorrow Mar the day's morrow; If man's life borrow, And man's death pay; If souls once taken, If lives once shaken,

Arise, awaken,
By night, by day,
Why with strong crying
And years of sighing,

Living and dying,
Fast ye and pray?
For all your weeping,
Waking and sleeping,
Death comes to reaping.

And takes away.
Though time rend after
Roof-tree from rafter,
A little laughter

Is much more worth Than thus to measure The hour, the treasure, The pain, the pleasure,

The death, the birth: Grief, when days alter, Like joy shall falter; Song-book and psalter,

Mourning and mirth. Live like the swallow; Seek not to follow, Where earth is hollow, Under the earth.

## SONG BEFORE DEATH.

(FROM THE FRENCH.)

### 1795.

SWEET mother, in a minute's span
Death parts thee and my love of thee:
Sweet love, that yet art living man,
Come back, true love, to comfort me.
Back, ah, come back! ah, wellaway!
But my love comes not any day.

As roses, when the warm West blows, Break to full flower, and sweeten spring,

My soul would break to a glorious rose In such wise at his whispering. In vain I listen; wellaway! My love says nothing any day.

You that will weep for pity of love
On the low place where I am lain,
I pray you, having wept enough,
Tell him for whom I bore such pain
That he was yet, ah! wellaway!
My true love to my dying day.

## ROCOCO.

Take hands, and part with laughter;
Touch lips, and part with tears;
Once more and no more after,
Whatever comes with years.
We twain shall not re-measure
The ways that left us twain,
Nor crush the lees of pleasure
From sanguine grapes of pain.

We twain once well in sunder,
What will the mad gods do
For hate with me, I wonder,
Or what for love with you?
Forget them till November,
And dream there's April yet;
Forget that I remember,
And dream that I forget.

Time found our tired love sleeping, And kissed away his breath; But what should we do weeping, Though light love sleep to death? We have drained his lips at leisure,
Till there's not left to drain
A single sob of pleasure,
A single pulse of pain.

Dream that the lips once breathless
Might quicken if they would;
Say that the soul is deathless;
Dream that the gods are good;
Say March may wed September,
And time divorce regret:
But not that you remember,
And not that I forget.

We have heard from hidden places
What love scarce lives and hears;
We have seen on fervent faces
The pallor of strange tears;
We have trod the wine-vat's treasure.
Whence, ripe to steam and stain,
Foams round the feet of pleasure
The blood-red must of pain.

Remembrance may recover,
And time bring back to time
The name of your first lover,
The ring of my first rhyme;
But rose-leaves of December
The frosts of June shall fret,
The day that you remember,
The day that I forget.

The snake that hides and hisses

In heaven, we twain have known
The grief of cruel kisses,
The joy whose mouth makes moan;
The pulse's pause and measure,
Where in one furtive vein
Throbs through the heart of pleasure
The purpler blood of pain.

We have done with tears and treasons. And love for treason's sake; Room for the swift new seasons, The years that burn and break. Dismantle and dismember Men's days and dreams, Juliette; For love may not remember, But time will not forget.

Life treads down love in flying, Time withers him at root; Bring all dead things and dying, Reaped sheaf and ruined fruit,

Where, crushed by three days' pressure, Our three days' love lies slain; And earlier leaf of pleasure,

And latter flower of pain.

Breathe close upon the ashes, It may be flame will leap; Unclose the soft close lashes, Lift up the lids, and weep. Light love's extinguished ember, Let one tear leave it wet, For one that you remember,

And ten that you forget.

## A BALLAD OF BURDENS.

THE burden of fair women. Vain delight,

And love self-slain in some sweet

shameful way,

And sorrowful old age that comes by night

As a thief comes that has no heart by day,

And change that finds fair cheeks and leaves them gray,

And weariness that keeps awake for

And grief that says what pleasure used to say:

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is

A burden without fruit in childbear-

Between the nightfall and the dawn threescore,

Threescore between the dawn and evening.

The shuddering in thy lips, the shuddering

In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire, Makes love seem shameful and a wretched thing:

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay, kneel down.

Cover thy head, and weep; for verily

These market-men that buy thy white and brown

In the last days shall take no thought for thee;

In the last days like earth thy face shall be,

Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with brine and mire,

Sad with sick leavings of the sterile

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt fear

Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy

And say at night, "Would God the day were here!"

And say at dawn, "Would God the day were dead!"

With weary days thou shalt be clothed and fed,

And wear remorse of heart for thine

Pain for thy girdle, and sorrow upon thine head:

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt see

Gold tarnished, and the gray above the green;

And as the thing thou seest thy face shall be, And no more as the thing beforetime

And thou shalt say of mercy, " It hath been;"

And living, watch the old lips and loves expire,

And talking, tears shall take thy breath between:

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sad sayings. In that day Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours, and tell

Thy times and ways and words of love, and say

How one was dear, and one desirable,

And sweet was life to hear and sweet to smell;

But now with lights reverse the old hours retire,

And the last hour is shod with fire from hell:

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in spring,

White rain and wind among the tender trees;

A summer of green sorrows gather-

Rank autumn in a mist of miseries, With sad face set towards the year, that sees

The charred ash drop out of the drop-

ping pyre,

And winter wan with many mala-

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight And out of love, beyond the reach of hands,

Changed in the changing of the dark

and light, They walk and weep about the barren lands

Where no seed is, nor any garner stands.

Where in short breaths the doubtful days respire,

And time's turned glass lets through the sighing sands: This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life and lust

Forsake thee, and the face of thy de-

And underfoot the heavy hour strews dust,

And overhead strange weathers burn and bite:

And where the red was, lo the bloodless white:

And where truth was, the likeness of a

And where day was, the likeness of the night:

This is the end of every man's desire.

L'ENVOY.

Princes, and ye whom pleasure quick eneth,

Heed well this rhyme before your pleasure tire;

For life is sweet, but after life is death. This is the end of every man's desire-

## BEFORE THE MIRROR.

(VERSES WRITTEN UNDER A PICTURE.)

INSCRIBED TO J. A. WHISTLER.

White rose in red rose-garden Is not so white; Snowdrops that plead for pardon

And pine for fright

Because the hard East blows Over their maiden rows,

Grow not as this face grows from pale to bright.

Behind the veil, forbidden, Shut up from sight, Love, is there sorrow hidden, Is there delight?

Is joy thy dower or grief,

White rose of weary leaf, Late rose whose life is brief, whose loves are light?

Soft snows, that hard winds harden Till each flake bite,

Fill all the flowerless garden Whose flowers took flight Long since when summer ceased,

And men rose up from feast, And warm west wind grew east, and

warm day night.

"Come snow, come wind or thunder High up in air,

I watch my face, and wonder At my bright hair;

Naught else exalts or grieves The rose at heart, that heaves

With love of her own leaves and lips that pair.

"She knows not loves that kissed her She knows not where:

Art thou the ghost, my sister, White sister there,

Am I the ghost, who knows? My hand, a fallen rose,

Lies snow-white on white snows, and takes no care.

"I cannot see what pleasures Or what pains were;

What pale new loves and treasures New years will bear;

What beam will fall, what shower,

What grief or joy for dower: But one thing knows the flower, - the flower is fair."

Glad, but not flushed with gladness, Since joys go by; Sad, but not bent with sadness, Since sorrows die;

Deep in the gleaming glass

She sees all past things pass, And all sweet life that was lie down and lie.

There glowing ghosts of flowers Draw down, draw nigh; And wings of swift spent hours

Take flight and fly; She sees by formless gleams,

She hears across cold streams, Dead mouths of many dreams that sing and sigh.

Face fallen and white throat lifted, With sleepless eye

She sees old loves that drifted, She knew not why, -Old loves and faded fears Float down a stream that hears

The flowing of all men's tears beneath the sky.

## IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

BACK to the flower-town, side by side, The bright months bring, New-born, the bridegroom and the bride, Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea, Filled full of sun;

All things come back to her, being free, -

All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot Flowers that were dead

Live, and old suns revive; but not That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea, Far north, I hear

One face shall never turn to me As once this year;

Shall never smile and turn and rest On mine as there.

Nor one most sacred hand be prest Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half lin

Half run before; The youngest to the oldest singer That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find Till all grief end,

In holiest age our mightiest mind, Father and friend.

But thou, if any thing endure, If hope there be,

O spirit that man's life left pure, Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were Look earthward now:

Let dreams revive the reverend hair, The imperial brow;

Come back in sleep, for in the life Where thou art not

We find none like thee. Time and strife And the world's lot

Move thee no more; but love at least, And reverent heart,

May move thee, royal and released,

Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust Receive and keep, Keep safe his dedicated dust, His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far, Mix with thy name, As morning-star with evening-star, His faultless fame.

# A SONG IN TIME OF ORDER. 1852.

PUSH hard across the sand,
For the salt wind gathers breath;
Shoulder and wrist and hand,
Push hard as the push of death.

The wind is as iron that rings,
The foam-heads loosen and flee;
It swells and welters and swings,
The pulse of the tide of the sea.

And up on the yellow cliff
The long corn flickers and shakes;
Push, for the wind holds stiff,
And the gunwale dips and rakes.

Good hap to the fresh fierce weather, The quiver and beat of the sea! While three men hold together, The kingdoms are less by three.

Out to the sea with her there,
Out with her over the sand,
Let the kings keep the earth for their
share!

We have done with the sharers of land.

They have tied the world in a tether, They have bought over God with a fee;

While three men hold together, The kingdoms are less by three.

We have done with the kisses that sting, The thief's mouth red from the feast, The blood on the hands of the king, And the lie at the lips of the priest.

Will they tie the winds in a tether, Put a bit in the jaws of the sea? While three men hold together, The kingdoms are less by three.

Let our flag run out straight in the wind! The old red shall be floated again When the ranks that are thin shall be thinned.

When the names that were twenty are ten:

When the devil's riddle is mastered, And the galley-bench creaks with a Pope,

We shall see Puonaparte the bastard Kick heels with his throat in a rope

While the shepherd sets wolves on his sheep, And the emperor halters his kine,

While Shame is a watchman asleep, And Faith is a keeper of swine,—

Let the wind shake our flag like a feather,

Like the plumes of the foam of the sea!

While three men hold together, The kingdoms are less by three.

All the world has its burdens to bear,
From Cayenne to the Austrian whips
Forth, with the rain in our hair
And the salt sweet foam in our lips;

In the teeth of the hard glad weather, In the blown wet face of the sea; While three men hold together, The kingdoms are less by three.

## A SONG IN TIME OF REVOLU-TION. 1860.

The heart of the rulers is sick, and the high-priest covers h's head,
For this is the song of the quick that is heard in the ears of the dead.

The poor and the halt and the blind are keen and mighty and fleet:

Like the noise of the blowing of wind is the sound of the noise of their feet.

The wind has the sound of a laugh in the clamor of days and of deeds:
The priests are scattered like chaff, and the rulers broken like reeds.

The high-priest sick from qualms, with his raiment bloodily dashed;

The thief with branded palms, and the liar with cheeks abashed.

They are smitten, they tremble greatly, they are pained for their pleasant things:

For the house of the priests made stately, and the might in the mouth of the kings.

They are grieved and greatly afraid; they are taken, they shall not flee: For the heart of the nations is made as

the strength of the springs of the sea.

They were fair in the grace of gold, they walked with delicate feet;

They were clothed with the cunning of old, and the smell of their garments was sweet.

For the breaking of gold in their hair they halt as a man made lame:

They are utterly naked and bare; their mouths are bitter with shame.

Wilt thou judge thy people now, O king that wast found most wise?

Wilt thou lie any more, O thou whose mouth is emptied of lies?

Shall God make a pact with thee, till his hook be found in thy sides?

Wilt thou put back the time of the sea, or the place of the season of tides? Set a word in thy lips, to stand before God with a word in thy mouth:

That ' the rain shall return in the land, and the tender dew after drouth."

But the arm of the elders is broken, their strength is unbound and undone:

They wait for a sign of a token; they cry, and there cometh none.

Their moan is in every place, the cry of them filleth the land:

There is shame in the sight of their face, there is fear in the thews of their hand.

They are girdled about the reins with a curse for the girdle thereon:

For the noise of the rending of chains, the face of their color is gone.

For the sound of the shouting of men, they are grievously stricken at heart:

They are smitten asunder with pain, their bones are smitten apart.

There is none of them all that is whole; their lips gape open for breath:

They are clothed with sickness of soul, and the shape of the shadow of death.

The wind is thwart in their feet; it is full of the shouting of mirth;

As one shaketh the sides of a sheet, so it shaketh the ends of the earth.

The sword, the sword is made keen; the iron has opened its mouth;

The corn is red that was green; it is bound for the sheaves of the south.

The sound of a word was shed, the sound of the wind as a breath,

In the ears of the souls that were dead, in the dust of the deepness of death; Where the face of the moon is taken, the ways of the stars undone,

The light of the whole sky shaken, the light of the face of the sun;

Where the waters are emptied and broken, the waves of the waters are stayed;

Where God has bound for a token the darkness that maketh afraid;

Where the sword was covered and hidden, and dust had grown in its side,

A word came forth that was bidden, the crying of one that cried:

The sides of the two-edged sword shall be bare, and its mouth shall be red,

For the breath of the face of the Lord that is felt in the bones of the dead.

## TO VICTOR HUGO.

In the fair days when god By man as godlike trod, And each alike was Greek, alike was

God's lightning spared, they said, Alone the happier head

Whose laurels screened it; fruitless grace for thee

To whom the high gods gave of right Their thunders and their laurels and their light.

Sunbeams and bays before
Our master's servants wore,
For these Apollo left in all men's lands;
But far from these cre now,
And watched with jealous brow,

Lay the blind lightnings shut between God's hands,

And only loosed on slaves and kings.

The terror of the tempest of their wings.

Born in those younger years That shone with storms of spears, And shook in the wind blown from a dead world's pyre,

When by her back-blown hair Napoleon caught the fair

And fierce Republic with her feet of fire,

And stayed with iron words and hands Her flight, and freedom in a thousand lands:

Thou sawest the tides of things Close over heads of kings, And thine hand felt the thunder, and to

Laurels and lightnings were
As sunbeams and soft air
Mixed each in other, or as mist with sea

Mixed, or as memory with desire, Or the lute's pulses with the louder lyre.

For thee man's spirit stood
Disrobed of flesh and blood,
And bare the heart of the most secret
hours;

And to thine hand more tame Than birds in winter came High hopes and unknown flying forms

of powers,

And from thy table fed, and sang

Till with the tune men's ears took fire
and rang.

Even all men's eyes and ears With fiery sound and tears Waxed hot, and cheeks caught flame

and eyelids light,
At those high songs of thine
That stung the sense like wine,
Or fell more soft than dew or snow by

night,
Or wailed as in some flooded cave
Sobs the strong broken spirit of a wave.

But we, our master, we Whose hearts, uplift to thee, Ache with the pulse of thy remembere

Ache with the pulse of thy remembered song,—

We ask not nor await
From the clinched hands of fate,
As thou, remission of the world's old
wrong;

Respite we ask not, nor release: Freedom a man may have, he shall not peace.

Though thy most fiery hope Storm heaven, to set wide ope The all-sought-for gate whence God or

chance debars All feet of men, all eyes -The old night resumes her skies,

Her hollow hiding-place of clouds and

Where naught save these is sure in

And, paven with death, our days are roofed with night.

One thing we can: to be Awhile, as men may, free; But not by hope or pleasure the most stern

Goddess, most awful-eyed, Sits, but on either side

Sits sorrow and the wrath of hearts that burn.

Sad faith that cannot hope or fear, And memory gray with many a flowerless year.

Not that in stranger's wise I lift not loving eyes To the fair foster-mother France, that

Beyond the pale fleet foam Help to my sires and home;

Whose great sweet breast could shelter those and save Whom from her nursing breasts and

Their land cast forth of old on gentler lands.

Not without thoughts that ache For theirs and for thy sake, I, born of exiles, hail thy banished head; I, whose young song took flight

Toward the great heat and light On me a child from thy far splendor

shed. From thine high place of soul and

Which, fallen on eyes yet feeble, made them strong.

Ah! not with lessening love For memories born hereof,

I look to that sweet mother-land, and

The old fields and fair full streams, And skies, but fled like dreams The feet of freedom and the thought of

And all between the skies and graves

The mirth of mockers and the shame of slaves.

She, killed with noisome air, Even she! and still so fair, Who said, "Let there be freedom," and

there was Freedom; and as a lance

The fiery eyes of France Touched the world's sleep, and as a sleep made pass

Forth of men's heavier ears and eyes Smitten with fire and thunder from new skies.

Are they men's friends indeed Who watch them weep and bleed? Because thou hast loved us, shall the gods love thee?

Thou, first of men and friend, Seest thou, even thou, the end? Thou knowest what hath been, knowest thou what shall be?

Evils may pass and hopes endure; But fate is dim, and all the gods obscure.

O nursed in airs apart, O poet highest of heart,

Hast thou seen time, who hast seen so many things?

Are not the years more wise, More sad than keenest eyes,

The years with soundless feet and sounding wings?

Passing we hear them not, but past The clamor of them thrills us, and their blast.

Thou art chief of us, and lord; Thy song is as a sword

Keen-edged and scented in the blade from flowers;

Thou art lord and king; but we Lift younger eyes, and see

Less of high hope, less light on wan dering hours;

Hours that have borne men down so long,

Seen the right fail, and watched uplift the wrong.

But thine imperial soul, As years and ruins roll

To the same end, and all things and all dreams

With the same wreck and roar Drift on the dim same shore, Still in the bitter foam and brackish

streams

Tracks the fresh water-spring to be,

Tracks the fresh water-spring to be, And sudden sweeter fountains in the sea.

As once the high god bound
With many a rivet round
Man's savior, and with iron nailed him
through,

At the wild end of things, Where even his own bird's wings Flagged, whence the sea shone like a drop of dew,

From Caucasus beheld below Past fathoms of unfathomable snow;

So the strong God, the chance Central of circumstance, Still shows him exile who will not be slave:

All thy great fame and thee Girt by the dim strait sea

With multitudinous walls of wandering wave;

Shows us our greatest from his throne Fate-stricken, and rejected of his own.

Yea, he is strong, thou say'st, A mystery many-faced, The wild beasts know him, and the wild

birds flee;
The blind night sees him, death

Shrinks beaten at his breath,
And his right hand is heavy on the sea:
We know he hath made us, and is
king:

We know not if he care for any thing.

Thus much, no more, we know. He bade what is, be so.

Bade light be, and bade night be, one by one:

Bade hope and fear, bade ill
And good redeem and kill,
Till all men be aweary of the sun,

And this world burn in its own flame, And bear no witness longer of his name.

Yet though all this be thus, Be those men praised of us

Who have loved and wrought and sor rowed, and not sinned

For fame or fear or gold, Nor waxed for winter cold,

Nor changed for changes of the worldly wind;

Praised above men of men be these, Till this one world and work we know shall cease.

Yea, one thing more than this, We know that one thing is,

The splendor of a spirit without blame, That not the laboring years Blind-born, nor any fears,

Nor men nor any gods can tire or tame; But purer power with fiery breath Fills, and exalts above the gulfs of death.

Praised above men be thou, Whose laurel-laden brow,

Made for the morning, droops not in the night;

Praised and beloved, that none Of all thy great things done

Flies higher than thy most equal spirit's flight;

Praised, that nor doubt nor hope could bend

Earth's loftiest head, found upright to the end.

# BEFORE DAWN.

SWEET life, if life were stronger, Earth clear of years that wrong her, Then two things might live longer,

Two sweeter things than they,— Delight, the rootless flower, And love, the bloomless bower; Delight that lives an hour,

And love that lives a day.

From evensong to daytime,
When April melts in Maytime,
Love lengthens out his playtime,
Love lessens breath by breath,
And kiss by kiss grows older
On listless throat or shoulder
Turned sideways now, turned colder
Than life that dreams of death.

This one thing once worth giving
Life gave, and seemed worth living;
Sin sweet beyond forgiving
And brief beyond regret:
To laugh and love together,
And weave with foam and feather
And wind and words the tether
Our memories play with yet.

Ah! one thing worth beginning, One thread in life worth spinning, Ah, sweet, one sin worth sinning With all the whole soul's will;

To lull you till one stilled you,
To kiss you till one killed you,
To feed you till one filled you,
Sweet lips, if love could fill;

To hunt sweet Love, and lose him Between white arms and bosom, Between the bud and blossom, Between your throat and chin; To say of shame—what is it? Of virtue—we can miss it; Of sin—we can but kiss it, And it's no longer sin;

To feel the strong soul, stricken Through fleshly pulses, quicken Beneath swift sighs that thicken, Soft hands and lips that smite; Lips that no love can tire, With hands that sting like fire, Weaving the web Desire

To snare the bird Delight.

But love so lightly plighted, Our love with torch unlighted, Paused near us unaffrighted, Who found and left him free: None, seeing us cloven in sunder,

None, seeing us cloven in sunder,
Will weep or laugh or wonder;
Light love stands clear of thunder,
And safe from winds at sea.

As, when late larks give warning Of dying lights and dawning, Night murmurs to the morning, "Lie still, O love, lie still;" And half her dark limbs cover The white limbs of her lover, With amorous plumes that hover And fervent lips that chill;

As scornful day represses
Night's void and vain caresses,
And from her cloudier tresses
Unwinds the gold of his,
With limbs from limbs dividing,
And breath by breath subsiding;
For love has no abiding,
But dies before the kiss:

So hath it been, so be it;
For who shall live and flee it?
But look that no man see it
Or hear it unaware;
Lest all who love and choose him
See Love, and so refuse him;
For all who find him lose him,
But all have found him fair.

# THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

HERE, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter, And men that laugh and weep, Of what may come hereafter For men that sow to reap: I am weary of days and hours, Blown buds of barren flowers, Desires and dreams and powers, And every thing but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor, And far from eye or ear Wan waves and wet winds labor, Weak ships and spirits steer; They drive adrift, and whither They wot not who make thither; But no such winds blow hither, And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice, No heather-flower or vine, But bloomless buds of poppies, Green grapes of Proserpine, Pale beds of blowing rushes Where no leaf blooms or blushes Save this whereout she crushes For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
Thev bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her, and follow
Where summer song rings hollow,
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither, The old loves with wearier wings; And all dead years draw thither, And all disastrous things; Dead dreams of days forsaken, Blind buds that snows have shaken Wild leaves that winds have taken Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow, And joy was never sure; To-day wiil die to-morrow; Time stoops to no man's lure; And love, grown faint and fretful, With lips but half regretful Sighs, and with eyes forgetful Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken, Nor any change of light; Nor sound of waters shaken, Nor any sound or sight; Nor wintry leaves nor vernal, Nor days nor things diurnal: Only the sleep eternal In an eternal night.

# LOVE AT SEA.

We are in love's land to-day:
Where shall we go?
Love, shall we start or stay,
Or sail or row?
There's many a wind and way,
And never a May but May:
We are in love's hand to-day;
Where shall we go?

Our land-wind is the breath
Of sorrows kissed to death,
And joys that were;
Our ballast is a rose;
Our way lies where God knows,
And love knows where.
We are in love's hand to-day—

Our seamen are fledged Loves, Our masts are bills of doves, Our decks fine gold; Our ropes are dead maids' hair, Our stores are love-shafts fair And manifold. We are in love's land to-day —

Where shall we land you, sweet? On fields of strange men's feet, Or fields near home? Or where the fire-flowers blow, Or where the flowers of snow, Or flowers of foam?

We are in love's hand to-day -

Land me, she says, where love Shows but one shaft, one dove, One heart, one hand. - A shore like that, my dear, Lies where no man will steer, No maiden land.

Imitated from Théophile Gautier.

## APRIL.

FROM THE FRENCH OF THE VIDAME DE CHARTRES. 12-?

WHEN the fields catch flower, And the underwood is green, And from bower unto bower The songs of the birds begin, I sing with sighing between. When I laugh and sing, I am heavy at heart for my sin; I am sad in the spring

For my love that I shall not win,

For a foolish thing.

This profit I have of my woe, That I know, as I sing, I know he will needs have it so Who is master and king, Who is lord of the spirit of spring. I will serve her, and will not spare Till her pity awake Who is good, who is pure, who is fair, Even her for whose sake

Love hath ta'en me and slain unaware.

O my lord, O Love, I have laid my life at thy feet: Have thy will thereof, Do as it please thee with it, For what shall please thee is sweet. I am come unto thee To do thee service, O Love!

Yet cannot I see Thou wilt take any pity thereof, Any mercy on me.

But the grace I have long time sought Comes never in sight, If in her it abideth not,

Through thy mercy and might, Whose heart is the world's delight. Thou hast sworn without fail I shall die, For my heart is set

On what hurts me, I wot not why, But cannot forget

What I love, what I sing for and sigh.

She is worthy of praise:

For this grief of her giving is worth All the joy of my days

That lie between death's day and

All the lordship of things upon earth. Nay, what have I said?

I would not be glad if I could: My dream and my dread

Are of her, and for her sake I would That my life were fled.

Lo, sweet, if I durst not pray to you, Then were I dead;

If I sang not a little to say to you, (Could it be said) O my love, how my heart would be

Ah, sweet who hast hold of my heart,

For thy love's sake I live; Do but tell me, ere either depart, What a lover may give For a woman so fair as thou art.

The lovers that disbelieve, False rumors shall grieve And evil-speaking shall part.

#### BEFORE PARTING.

A MONTH or twain to live on honey-

Is pleasant; but one tires of scented time,

Cold sweet recurrence of accepted rhyme,

And that strong purple under juice and foam

Where the wine's heart has burst; Nor feel the latter kisses like the first.

Once yet, this poor one time: I will not pray

Even to change the bitterness of it,
The bitter taste ensuing on the sweet,
To make your tears fall where your
soft hair lay

All blurred and heavy in some perfumed wise

Over my face and eyes.

And yet who knows what end the scythèd wheat

Makes of its foolish poppies' mouths of red?

These were not sown, these are not harvested,

They grow a month, and are cast under feet,

And none has care thereof, As none has care of a divided love.

I know each shadow of your lips by rote,

Each change of love in eyelids and eyelrows;

The fashion of fair temples tremulous

With tender blood, and color of your throat;

I know not how love is gone out of this, Seeing that all was his.

Love's likeness there endures upon all these:

But out of these one shall not gather love.

Day hath not strength nor the night shade enough

To make love whole, and fill his lips with ease,

As some bee-builded cell

Feels at filled lips the heavy honey swell.

I know not how this last month leaves your hair

Less full of purple color and hid spice, And that luxurious trouble of closed eyes

Is mixed with meaner shadow and waste care;

And love, kissed out by pleasure, seems not yet
Worth patience to regret.

# THE SUNDEW.

A LITTLE marsh-plant, yellow green, And pricked at lip with tender red. Tread close, and either way you tread Some faint black water jets between Lest you should bruise the curious head

A live thing may be; who shall know? The summer knows and suffers it; For the cool moss is thick and sweet Each side, and saves the blossom so That it lives out the long June heat.

The deep scent of the heather burns About it: breathless though it be, Bow down and worship; more than we Is the least flower whose life returns, Least weed renascent in the sea.

We are vexed and cumbered in earth's sight

With wants, with many memories: These see their mother what she is, Glad-growing, till August leave more bright

The apple-colored cranberries.

Wind blows and bleaches the strong grass,

Blown all one way to shelter it From trample of strayed kine, with feet Felt heavier than the moorhen was, Strayed up past patches of wild wheat You call it sundew: how it grows, If with its color it have breath, If life taste sweet to it, if death Pain its soft petal, no man knows: Man has no sight or sense that saith.

My sundew, grown of gentle days, In these green miles the spring begun Thy growth ere April had half done With the soft secret of her ways, Or June made ready for the sun.

O red-lipped mouth of marsh-flower! I have a secret halved with thee. The name that is love's name to me Thou knowest, and the face of her Who is my festival to see.

The hard sun, as thy petals knew, Colored the heavy moss-water: Thou wert not worth green midsummer, Nor fit to live to August blue, O sundew, not remembering her.

#### AN INTERLUDE.

In the greenest growth of the Maytime, I rode where the woods were wet, Between the dawn and the daytime:

The spring was glad that we met.

There was something the season wanted, Though the ways and the woods smelt sweet,—

The breath at your lips that panted,
The pulse of the grass at your feet.

You came, and the sun came after, And the green grew golden above; And the flag-flowers lightened with laughter,

And the meadow-sweet shook with love.

Your feet in the full-grown grasses Moved soft as a weak wind blows: You passed me as April passes, With face made out of a rose.

By the stream where the stems were slender,

Your bright foot paused at the sedge:

It might be to watch the tender Light leaves in the springtime hedge,

On boughs that the sweet month blanches

With flowery frost of May; It might be a bird in the branches; It might be a thorn in the way.

I waited to watch you linger
With foot drawn back from the dew,
Till a sunbeam straight like a finger
Struck sharp through the leaves at
you.

And a bird overhead sang Follow,
And a bird to the right sang Here;
And the arch of the leaves was hollow,

And the meaning of May was clear.

I saw where the sun's hand pointed,
I knew what the bird's note said:
By the dawn and the dewfall anointed,
You were queen by the gold on your
head.

As the glimpse of a burnt-out ember Recalls a regret of the sun, I remember, forget, and remember What Love saw done and undone.

I remember the way we parted,
The day and the way we met:
You hoped we were both brokenhearted,

And May with her world in flower

Seemed still to murmur and smile
As you murmured and smiled for an
hour:

I saw you turn at the stile.

A hand like a white wood-blossom You lifted, and waved, and passed, With head hung down to the bosom, And pale, as it seemed, at last.

And the best and the worst of this is, That neither is most to blame, If you've forgotten my kisses, And I've forgotten your name.

## HENDECASYLLABICS.

In the month of the long decline of roses,

I, beholding the summer dead before me,

Set my face to the sea, and journeyed silent,

Gazing eagerly where above the seamark

Flame as fierce as the fervid eyes of

Half divided the eyelids of the sun-

Till I heard as it were a noise of waters
Moving tremulous under feet of angels
Multitudinous, out of all the heavens;
Knew the fluttering wind, the fluttered
foliage,

Shaken fitfully, full of sound and

shadow:

And saw, trodden upon by noiseless angels,

Long mysterious reaches fed with

moonlight,

Sweet sad straits in a soft subsiding channel,

Blown about by the lips of winds I knew not,

Winds not born in the north nor any quarter,

Winds not warm with the south nor any sunshine;

Heard between them a voice of exultation,

"Lo, the summer is dead, the sun is faded,

Even like as a leaf the year is withered, All the fruits of the day from all her branches

Gathered, neither is any left to gather.
All the flowers are dead, the tender blossoms.

All are taken away; the season wasted, Like an ember among the fallen ashes. Now with light of the winter days, with moonlight,

Light of snow, and the bitter light of hoar-frost,

We bring flowers that fade not after autumn,

Pale white chaplets and crowns of latter seasons. Fair false leaves (but the summer leaves were falser),

Woven under the eyes of stars and planets

When low light was upon the windy reaches

Where the flower of foam was blown, a lily

Dropt among the sonorous fruitless

And green fields of the sea that make no pasture:

Since the winter begins, the weeping winter.

All whose flowers are tears, and round his temples

Iron blossom of frost is bound forever."

#### SAPPHICS.

ALL the night sleep came not upon my eyelids,

Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a feather,

Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of iron

Stood and beheld me.

Then to me so lying awake a vision Came without sleep over the seas and touched me,

Softly touched mine eyelids and lips; and I too,

Full of the vision,

Saw the white implacable Aphrodite, Saw the hair unbound and the feet unsandalled

Shine as fire of sunset on western waters:

Saw the reluctant

Feet, the straining plumes of the doves that drew her,

Looking always, looking with necks

Back to Lesbos, back to the hills where under

Shone Mitylene;

Heard the flying feet of the Loves behind her

Make a sudden thunder upon the waters, As the thunder flung from the strong unclosing

Wings of a great wind.

So the goddess fled from her place, with awful

Sound of feet and thunder of wings around her:

While behind a clamor of singing women

Severed the twilight.

Ah the singing, ah the delight, the passion!

All the Loves wept, listening; sick with

anguish,
Stood the crowned nine Muses about
Apollo;

Fear was upon them,

While the tenth sang wonderful things they knew not.

Ah the tenth, the Lesbian! the nine were silent,

None endured the sound of her song for weeping; Laurel by laurel,

Faded all their crowns; but about her forehead,
Round her woven tresses and ashen

Round her woven tresses and ashen temples White as dead snow, paler than grass

in summer, Ravaged with kisses,

Shone a light of fire as a crown forever.

Yea, almost the implacable Aphrodite Paused, and almost wept; such a song was that song,

Yea, by her name too

Called her, saying, "Turn to me, O my Sappho!"

Yet she turned her face from the Love's, she saw not

Tears for laughter darken immortal eyelids,

Heard not about her

Fearful fitful wings of the doves de parting,

Saw not how the bosom of Aphrodite Shook with weeping, saw not her shaken raiment,

Saw not her hands wrung;

Saw the Lesbians kissing across their smitten

Lutes with lips more sweet than the sound of lute-strings,

Mouth to mouth and hand upon hand her chosen,

Fairer than all men:

Only saw the beautiful lips and fingers, Full of songs and kisses and little whispers,

Full of music; only beheld among them Soar, as a bird soars

Newlyfledged, hervisible song, a marvel, Made of perfect sound and exceeding passion,

Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders, Clothed with the wind's wings.

Then rejoiced she, laughing with love, and scattered

Roses, awful roses of holy blossom; Then the Loves thronged sadly with

hidden faces Round Aphrodite,

Then the Muses, stricken at heart, were silent:

Yea, the gods waxed pale; such a song was that song.

All reluctant, all with a fresh repulsion, Fled from before her.

All withdrew long since, and the land was barren,

was barren,
Full of fruitless women and music only.
Now perchance, when winds are as

suaged at sunset, Lulled at the dewfall,

By the gray sea-side, unassuaged, un heard of,

Unbeloved, unseen in the ebb of twi

Ghosts of outcast women return lamenting,

Purged not in Lethe,

Clothed about with flame and with tears, and singing

Songs that move the heart of the shaken heaven,

Songs that break the heart of the earth with pity,

Hearing, to hear them.

# AT ELEUSIS.

MEN of Eleusis, ye that with long stayes

Sit in the market-nouses, and speak words

Made sweet with wisdom as the rare wine is

Thickened with honey; and ye sons of these

Who in the glad thick streets go up

For pastime or grave traffic or mere chance:

And all fair women having rings of gold On hands or hair; and chiefest over these

I name you, daughters of this man the

Who dipping deep smooth pitchers of pure brass

Under the bubbled wells, till each round lip

Stooped with loose gurgle of waters incoming,
Found me an old sick woman, lamed

and lean,
Besia; a growth of builded olive-boughs

Whence multiplied thick song of thickplumed throats—

Also wet tears filled up my hollow hands

By reason of my crying into them —
And pitied me; for as cold water ran
And washed 'he pitchers full from lip
to lip,

So washed both eyes full the strong salt of tears.

And ye put water to my mouth, made sweet

With brown hill-berries: so in time I spoke,

And gathered my loose knees from under me.

Moreover, in the broad, fair halls this month

Have I found space and bountiful abode To please me. I Demeter speak of this,

Who am the mother and the mate of things:

For as ill men by drugs or singing words

Shut the doors inward of the narrow womb

Like a lock bolted with round iron through,

Thus I shut up the body and sweet mouth

Of all soft pasture and the tender land, So that no seed can enter in by it,

Though one sow thickly, nor some grain get out

Past the hard clods men cleave and bite with steel

To widen the sealed lips of them for use.

None of you is there in the peopled street

But knows how all the dry-drawn fur rows ache

With no green spot made count of in the black;

How the wind finds no comfortable grass,

Nor is assuaged with bud nor breath of herbs;

And in hot autumn, when ye house the stacks,
All fields are helpless in the sun all

All fields are helpless in the sun, all trees

Stand as a man stripped out of all but skin.

Nevertheless, ye sick have help to get By means and stablished ordinance of God;

For God is wiser than a good man is. But never shall new grass be sweet in

earth
Till I get righted of my wound and

By changing counsel of ill-minded Zeus For of all other gods is none save me Clothed with like power to build and break the year.

I make the lesser green begin, when

Touches not earth but with one fearful foot;

And as a careful gilder with grave art Soberly colors and completes the face, Mouth, chin, and all, of some sweet work in stone,

I carve the shapes of grass and tender

And color the ripe edges and long spikes

With the red increase and the grace of gold.

No tradesman in soft wools is cunninger To kill the secret of the fat white

With stains of blue and purple wrought

Three moons were made, and three moons burnt away,

While I held journey hither out of Crete,

Comfortless, tended by grave Hecate, Whom my wound stung with double iron point:

For all my face was like a cloth wrung out

With close and weeping wrinkles, and both lids

Sodden with salt continuance of tears. For Hades and the sidelong will of Zeus,

And that lame wisdom that has writhen feet,

Lunning, begotten in the bed of Shame, These three took evil will at me, and made

Such counsel, that when time got wing to fly

This Hades out of summer and low fields

Forced the bright body of Persephone: Out of pure grass, where she lying down, red flowers

Made their sharp little shadows on her sides,

Pale heat, pale color on pale maiden flesh, —

And chill water slid over her reddening feet.

Killing the throbs in their soft blood; and birds,

Perched next her elbow, and pecking at her hair.

Stretched their necks more to see her than even to sing.

A sharp thing is it I have need to say; For Hades holding both white wrists of hers

Unloosed the girdle, and with knot by knot

Bound her between his wheels upon the seat,

Bound her pure body, holiest yet and dear

To me and God as always, clothed about

With blossoms loosened, as her knees went down,

Let fall as she let go of this and this
By tens and twenties tumbled to her
feet,

White waifs or purple of the pasturage. Therefore with only going up and down My feet were wasted, and the gracious air.

To me discomfortable and dun, became As weak smoke blowing in the underworld.

And finding in the process of ill days What part had Zeus herein, and how as

He coped with Hades, yokefellow in sin,

I set my lips against the meat of gods, And drank not, neither ate or slept, in heaven.

Nor in the golden greeting of their mouths

Did ear take note of me, nor eye at all Track my feet going in the ways of them.

Like a great fire on some strait slip of land

Between two washing inlets of wet sea That burns the grass up to each lip of beach,

And strengthens, waxing in the growth of wind,

So burnt my soul in me at heaven and earth,

Each way a ruin and a hungry plague, Visible evil; nor could any night Put cool between mine eyelids, nor the

With competence of gold fill out my want.

Yea, so my flame burnt up the grass and stones,

Shone to the salt-white edges of thin sea, Distempered all the gracious work, and made

Sick change, unseasonable increase of days

And scant avail of seasons; for by this The fair gods faint in hollow heaven: there comes

No taste of burnings of the twofold fat To leave their palates smooth, nor in their lips

Soft rings of smoke, and weak scent wandering;

All cattle waste and rot, and their ill smell

Grows alway from the lank, unsavory

That no man slays for offering; the sea And waters moved beneath the heath and corn

Preserve the people of fin-twinkling fish,

And river-flies feed thick upon the smooth;

But all earth over is no man or bird (Except the sweet race of the kingfisher)
That lacks not, and is wearied with much loss.

Meantime, the purple inward of the house

house
Was softened with all grace of scent
and sound

In ear and nostril perfecting my praise; Faint grape-flowers and cloven honeycake

And the just grain with dues of the shed salt

Made me content: yet my hand loosened not

Its gripe upon your harvest all year long.

While I, thus woman-muffled in wan flesh

And waste externals of a perished face, Preserved the levels of my wrath and love

Patiently ruled; and with soft offices

Cooled the sharp noons, and busied the warm nights

In care of this my choice, this child my choice,

Triptolemus, the king's selected son:
That this fair yearlong body, which
hath grown

Strong with strange milk upon the mortal lip

And nerved with half a god, might so increase

Outside the bulk and the bare scope of man;

And waxen over large to hold within Base breath of yours, and this impoverished air,

I might exalt him past the flame of stars,

The limit and walled reach of the great world.

Therefore my breast made common to his mouth

Immortal savors, and the taste whereat Twice their hard life strains out the colored veins,

And twice its brain confirms the narrow shell.

Also at night, unwinding cloth from cloth

As who unhusks an almond to the white, And pastures curiously the purer taste, I bared the gracious limbs and the soft feet.

Unswaddled the weak hands, and in mid-ash

Laid the sweet flesh of either feeble side,

More tender for impressure of some touch

Than wax to any pen; and lit around Fire, and made crawl the white, wormshapen flame,

And leap in little angers spark by

At head at once, and feet; and the faint hair

Hissed with rare sprinkles in the closer curl,

And like scaled oarage of a keen thin fish

In sea-water, so in pure fire his feet Struck out, and the flame bit not in his flesh, But like a kiss it curled his lip, and heat

Fluttered his eyelids; so each night I blew

The hot ash red to purge him to full god.

Ill is it when fear hungers in the soul For painful food, and chokes thereon,

being fed;

And ill slant eyes interpret the straight

But in their scope its white is wried to black:

By the queen Metaneira mean I this; For with sick wrath upon her lips and heart,

Narrowing with fear the spleenful passages,

She thought to thread this web's fine ravel out,

Nor leave her shuttle split in combing it;

Therefore she stole on us, and with hard sight

Peered, and stooped close; then with pale, open mouth

As the fire smote her in the eyes be-

Cried, and the child's laugh sharply shortening

As fire doth under rain, fell off; the

Writhed once all through and died, and in thick dark

Tears fell from mine on the child's weeping eyes,

Eyes dispossessed of strong inheritance And mortal fallen anew. Who not the less From bud of beard to pale-gray flower

of hair
Shall wax vine-wise to a lordly vine,

whose grapes

Bleed the red, heavy blood of swoln soft wine,

Subtle with sharp leaves' intricacy, until Full of white years and blossom of hoary days

I take him perfected; for whose one sake

I am thus gracious to the least who stands

Filleted with white wool and girt upon

As he whose prayer endures upon the lip

And falls not waste: wherefore let sacrifice

Burn and run red in all the wider ways, Seeing I have sworn by the pale tem ples' band

And poppied hair of gold Persephone Sad-tressed and pleached low down about her brows,

And by the sorrow in her lips, and death Her dumb and mournful-mouthed minister,

My word for you is eased of its harsh weight

And doubled with soft promise; and your king

Triptolemus, this Celeus dead and swathed

Purple and pale for golden burial, Shall be your helper in my services, Dividing earth and reaping fruits there-

In fields where wait, well-girt, wellwreathen, all

The heavy-handed seasons all year through;

Saving the choice of warm spear-headed grain,

And stooping sharp to the slant-sided share

All beasts that furrow the remeasured land
With their bowed needs of burden

With their bowed necks of burden equable.

## AUGUST.

THERE were four apples on the bough, Half gold, half red, that one might know The blood was ripe inside the core; The color of the leaves was more Like stems of yellow corn that grow Through all the gold June meadow's floor.

The warm smell of the fruit was good To feed on, and the split green wood, With all its bearded lips and stains Of mosses in the cloven veins, Most pleasant, if one lay or stood In sunshine or in happy rains. There were four apples on the tree, Red stained through gold, that all might see

The sun went warm from core to rind;
The green leaves made the summer blind

In that soft place they kept for me With golden apples shut behind.

The leaves caught gold across the sun, And where the bluest air begun, Thirsted for song to help the heat; As I to feel my lady's feet Draw close before the day were done: Both lips grew dry with dreams of it.

In the mute August afternoon
They trembled to some undertune
Of music in the silver air:
Great pleasure was it to be there
Till green turned duskier, and the moon
Colored the corn-sheaves like gold hair.

That August time it was delight
To watch the red moons wane to white
'Twixt gray seamed stems of appletrees:

A sense of heavy harmonies Grew on the growth of patient night, More sweet than shapen music is.

But some three hours before the moon The air, still eager from the noon, Flagged after heat, not wholly dead; Against the stem I leant my head; The color soothed me like a tune, Green leaves all round the gold and red.

I lay there till the warm smell grew More sharp, when flecks of yellow dew Between the round ripe leaves had blurred

The rind with stain and wet: I heard A wind that blew and breathed and blew, Too weak to alter its one word.

The wet leaves next the gentle fruit Felt smoother, and the brown tree-root Felt the mould warmer: I, too, felt (As water feels the slow gold melt Right through it when the day burns mute)
The peace of time wherein love dwelt.

There were four apples on the tree, Gold stained on red, that all might see The sweet blood filled them to the core: The color of her hair is more Like stems of fair (aint gold, that be Mown from the harvest's middle-floor.

#### A CHRISTMAS CAROL.1

THREE damsels in the queen's chamber,
The queen's mouth was most fair:
She spake a word of God's mother
As the combs went in her hair.
Mary that is of might,
Bring us to thy Son's sight.

They held the gold combs out from her.
A span's length off her head:
She sang this song of God's mother
And of her bearing-bed.
Mary most full of grace,
Bring us to thy Son's face.

When she sat at Joseph's hand,
She looked against her side;
And either way from the short silk band
Her girdle was all wried.
Mary that all good may,
Bring us to thy Son's way.

Mary had three women for her bed:
The twain were maidens clean;
The first of them had white and red,
The third had riven green.
Mary that is so sweet,
Bring us to thy Son's feet.

She had three women for her hair:
Two were gloved soft and shod;
The third had feet and fingers bare,
She was the likest God.
Mary that wieldeth land,
Bring us to thy Son's hand.

She had three women for her ease:
The twain were good women;
The first two were the two Maries,
The third was Magdalen.
Mary that perfect is,
Bring us to thy Son's kiss.

<sup>1</sup> Suggested by a drawing of Mr. D. G Ros setti's

Joseph had three workmen in his stall, To serve him well upon:

The first of them were Peter and Paul, The third of them was John. Mary, God's handmaiden, Bring us to thy Son's ken.

"If your child be none other man's, But if it be very mine,

The bedstead shall be gold two spans, The bedfoot silver fine." Mary that made God mirth, Bring us to thy Son's birth.

"If the child be some other man's, And if it be none of mine, The manger shall be straw two spans, Betwixen kine and kine." Mary that made sin cease, Bring us to thy Son's peace

Christ was born upon this wise: It fell on such a night, Neither with sounds of psalteries, Nor with fire for light. Mary that is God's spouse, Bring us to thy Son's house.

The star came out upon the east With a great sound and sweet: Kings gave gold to make him feast, And myrrh for him to eat. Mary, of thy sweet mood, Bring us to thy Son's good.

He had two handmaids at his head, One handmaid at his feet: The twain of them were fair and red, The third one was right sweet. Mary that is most wise, Bring us to thy Son's eyes. Amen.

THE MASQUE OF QUEEN BER-SABE

#### A MIRACLE-PLAY.

King David. Knights mine, all that be in hall, I have a council to you all, Because of this thing God lets fall Among us for a sign.

For some days hence as I did eat From kingly dishes my good meat, There flew a bird between my feet

As red as any wine.

This bird had a long bill of red, And a gold ring above his head; Long time he sat and nothing said. Put softly down his neck, and fed

From the gilt patens fine: And as I marvelled at the last, He shut his two keen eyen fast, And suddenly woxe big and brast Ere one should tell to nine.

Primus Miles. Sir, note this that I will say:

That Lord who maketh corn with hay, And morrows each of yesterday, He hath you in his hand.

Secundus Miles (Paganus quidam). By Satan I hold no such thing; For if wine swell within a king Whose ears for drink are hot and ring, The same shall dream of wine-bibbing Whilst he can lie or stand.

Queen Bersabe. Peace now, lords, for Godis head. Ye chirk as starlings that be fed,

And gape as fishes newly dead: The devil put your bones to bed, Lo, this is all to say.

Secundus Miles. By Mahound, lords. I have good will This devil's bird to wring and spill;

For now meseems our game goes ill, Ye have scant hearts to play.

Tertius Miles. Lo, sirs, this word is there said,

That Urias the knight is dead Through some ill craft: by Poulis head, I doubt his blood hath made so red This bird that flew from the queen's bed Whereof ye have such fear.

King David. Yea, my good knave, and is it said

That I can raise men from the dead? By God I think to have his head Who saith words of my lady's bed For any thief to hear.

Et percutiat eum in capite

Queen Bersabe. I wis men shall spit

And say it were but right for thee That one should hang thee on a tree. Ho! it were a fair thing to see The big stones bruise her false body;

Fie! who shall see her dead?

King David. I rede you have no fear of this,

For as ye wot, the first good kiss I had must be the last of his; Now are ye queen of mine, I wis, And lady of a house that is Full rich of meat and bread.

Primus Miles. I bid you make good cheer to be

So fair a queen as all men see. And hold us for your lieges free: By Peter's soul that hath the key, Ye have good hap of it.

That is so scant of wit.

Secundus Miles. I would that he were hanged and dead Who hath no joy to see your head With gold about it, barred on red: I hold him as a sow of lead

Tunc dicat NATHAN propheta. king! I have a word to thee: The child that is in Bersabe Shall wither without light to see; This word is come of God by me

For sin that ye have done. Because herein ye did not right, To take the fair one lamb to smite That was of Urias the knight:

Ye wist he had but one. Full many sheep I wot ye had, And many women, when ye bade To do your will and keep you glad; And a good crown about your head

With gold to show thereon. This Urias had one poor house, With low-barred latoun shot-windows, And scant of corn to fill a mouse; And rusty basnets for his brows,

To wear them to the bone. Yea, the roofs also, as men sain, Were thin to hold against the rain: Therefore what rushes were there lain Grew wet withouten foot of men; The stancheons were all gone in twain

As sick man's flesh is gone. Nathless he had great joy to see The long hair of this Bersabe Fall round her lap and round her knee Even to her small soft feet, that be Shod now with crimson royally,

And covered with clean gold. Likewise great joy he had to kiss Her throat, where now the scarlet is Against her little chin, I wis,

That then was but cold. No scarlet then her kirtle had. And little gold about it sprad; But her red mouth was always glad To kiss, albeit the eyes were sad With love they had to hold.

Secundus Miles. How! old thief, thy wits are lame; To clip such it is no shame;

I rede you in the devil's name, Ye come not here to make men game: By Termagaunt that maketh grame, I shall to-bete thine head.

Hic Diabolus capiat eum. This knave hath sharp fingers, perfay; Mahound you thank and keep alway, And give you good knees to pray; What man hath no lust to play, The devil wring his ears, I say: There is no more but wellaway, For now am I dead.

King David. Certes his mouth is wried and black, Full little pence be in his sack: This devil hath him by the back, It is no boot to lie.

Nathan. Sitteth now still, and learn of me A little while, and ye shall see The face of God's strength presently. All queens made as this Bersabe, All that were fair and foul ye be, Come hither; it am I. Et hic omnes cantabunt.

Herodias. I am the queen Herodias. This headband of my temples was King Herod's gold band woven me: This broken dry staff in my hand Was the queen's staff of a great land Betwixen Perse and Samarie. For that one dancing of my feet, The fire is come in my green wheat, From one sea to the other sea.

Aholibah. I am the queen Aholibah. My lips kissed dumb the word of Ah Sighed on strange lips grown sick thereby.

God wrought to me my royal bed: The inner work thereof was red,

The outer work was ivory.

My mouth's heat was the heat of flame
For lust towards the kings that came
With horsemen riding royally.

Cleopatra. I am the queen of Ethiope. Love bade my kissing eyelids ope, That men beholding might praise love; My hair was wonderful and curled;

My lips held fast the mouth o' the world To spoil the strength and speech thereof.

The latter triumph in my breath Bowed down the beaten brows of death, Ashamed they had not wrath enough.

Abihail. I am the queen of Tyrians. My hair was glorious for twelve spans, That dried to loose dust afterward. My stature was a strong man's length: My neck was like a place of strength

Built with white walls, even and hard. Like the first noise of rain leaves catch One from another, snatch by snatch,

Is my praise, hissed against and marred.

Azubah. I am the queen of Amorites.
My face was like a place of lights
With multitudes at festival.
The glory of my gracious brows
Was like God's house made glorious
With colors upon either wall.
Between my brows and hair there was
A white space like a space of glass
With golden candles over all.

Aholah. I am the queen of Amalek. There was no tender touch or fleck.

To spoil my body or bared feet.

My words were soft like dulcimers, And the first sweet of grape-flowers Made each side of my bosom sweet. My raiment was as tender fruit

Whose rind smells sweet of spice-tree

Bruised balm-blossom and budded wheat.

Ahinoam. I am the queen Ahinoam.
Like the throat of a soft slain lamb
Was my throat, softer veined than
his:

My lips were as two grapes the sun Lays his whole weight of heat upon Like a mouth heavy with a kiss: My hair's pure purple a wrought fleece, My temples therein as a piece Of a pomegranate's cleaving is.

Atarah. I am the queen Sidonian.

My face made faint the face of man,

And strength was bound between my

brows.

Spikenard was hidden in my ships, Honey and wheat and myrrh in strips, White wools that shine as color does,

Soft linen dyed upon the fold, Split spice and cores of scented gold, Cedar and broken calamus.

Semiramis. I am the queen Semiramis.

The whole world, and the sea that is

In fashion like a chrysopras, The noise of all men laboring, The priest's mouth tired through thanks-

giving,
The sound of love in the blood's

pause,
The strength of love in the blood's beat,
All these were cast beneath my feet,
And all found lesser than I was.

Hesione. I am the queen Hesione. The seasons that increased in me Made my face fairer than all men's. I had the summer in my hair; And all the pale gold autumn air

Was as the habit of my sense. My body was as fire that shone: God's beauty that makes all things one

Was one among my handmaidens.

Chrysothemis. I am the queen of Samothrace.

God, making roses, made my face
As a rose filled up full with red.
My prows made sharp the straitened
seas

From Pontus to that Chersonese Whereon the ebbed Asian stream is

My hair was as sweet scent that drips:
-Love's breath begun about my lips
Kindled the lips of people dead.

Thomyris. I am the queen of Scythians.

My strength was like no strength of man's,

My face like day, my breast like

springs.

My fame was felt in the extreme land

That hath sunshine on the one hand,

And on the other star-shining.

Yea, and the wind there fails of breath; Yea, and there life is waste like death; Yea, and there death is a glad thing.

Harhas. I am the queen of Anakim. In the spent years whose speech is dim, Whose raiment is the dust and death, My stately body without stain

Shone as the shining race of rain

Whose hair a great wind scattereth. Now hath God turned my lips to sights, Plucked off mine eyelids from mine eyes, And sealed with seals my way of breath.

Myrrha. I am the queen Arabian. The tears wherewith mine eyelids ran Smelt like my perfumed eyelids'smell. A harsh thirst made my soft mouth hard, That ached with kisses afterward;

My brain rang like a beaten bell. As tears on eyes, as fire on wood, Sin fed upon my breath and blood,

Sin made my breasts subside and swell.

Pasiphae. I am the queen Pasiphae. Not all the pure clean-colored sea Could cleanse or cool my yearning veins:

Nor any root nor herb that grew, Flag-leaves that let green water through, Nor washing of the dews and rains. From shame's pressed core I wrung the

Fruit's savor that was death to eat, Whereof no seed but death remains-

Sappho. I am the queen of Lesbians. My love, that had no part in man's,

Was sweeter than all shape of sweet. The intolerable infinite desire

Made my face pale like faded fire

When the ashen pyre falls through with heat.

My blood was hot wan wine of love, And my song's sound the sound thereof, The sound of the delight of it.

Messalina. I am the queen of Italy. These were the signs God set on me: A barren beauty subtle and sleek, Curled carven hair, and cheeks worn

wan

speak.

With fierce false lips of many a man,
Large temples where the blood ran
weak,

A mouth athirst and amorous, And hungering as the grave's mouth

does, That, being an hungered, cannot

Amestris. I am the queen of Persians.
My breasts were lordlier than bright
swans,

My body as amber fair and thin.
Strange flesh was given my lips for bread,

With poisonous hours my days were fed,

And my feet shod with adder skin. In Shushan toward Ecbatane

I wrought my joys with tears and pain, My loves with blood and bitter sin.

Ephrath. I am the queen of Rephaim. God, that some while refraineth him,

Made in the end a spoil of me. My rumor was upon the world

As strong sound of swoln water hurled Through porches of the straining sea

My hair was like the flag-flower, And my breasts carven goodlier

Than beryl with chalcedony.

Pasithea. I am the queen of Cypriotes. Mine oarsmen, laboring with brown throats,

Sang of me many a tender thing. My maidens, girdled loose, and braced With gold from bosom to white waist, Praised me between their wool-comb-

All that praise Venus all night long With hips like speech and lids like song Praised me till song lost heart to sing.

Alaciel. I am the queen Alaciel. My mouth was like that moist gold cell Whereout the thickest honey drips. Mine eyes were as a gray-green sea: The amorous blood that smote on me Smote to my feet and finger-tips. My throat was whiter than the dove,

Mine eyelids as the seals of love, And as the doors of love my lips.

Erigone. I am the queen Erigone. The wild wine shed as blood on me

Made my face brighter than a bride's.
My large lips had the old thirst of earth,
Mine arms the might of the old sea's
girth

Bound round the whole world's iron sides.

sides.

Within mine eyes and in mine ears Were music and the wine of tears, And light, and thunder of the tides.

Et hic exeant, et dicat BERSABE regina.
Alas! God, for thy great pity
And for the might that is in thee,
Behold, I woful Bersabe
Cry out with stoopings of my knee,
And thy wrath laid and bound on me

Till I may see thy love.
Behold, Lord, this child is grown
Within me between bone and bone
To make me mother of a son,
Made of my body with strong moan:
There shall not be another one

That shall be made hereof.

King David. Lord God, alas! what shall I sain?

Lo, thou art as an hundred men Both to break and build again:
The wild ways thou makest plain,

Thine hands hold the hail and rain, And thy fingers both grape and grain; Of their largess we be all well fain,

And of their great pity:
The sun thou madest of good gold,
Of clean silver the moon cold,
All the great stars thou hast told
As thy cattle in thy fold
Every one by his name of old;
Wind and water thou hast in hold,

Both the land and the long sea; Both the green sea and the land, Lord God, thou hast in hand, Both white water and gray sand; Upon thy right or thy left hand There is no man that may stand:

Lord, thou rue on me. O wise Lord, if thou be keen
To note things amiss that been,
I am not worth a shell of bean
More than an old mare meagre and
lean.

For all my wrong-doing with my queen, It grew not of our heartes clean.

But it began of her body.
For it fell in the hot May,
I stood within a paven way
Built of fair bright stone, perfay,
That is as fire of night and day,

And lighteth all my house.
Therein be neither stones nor sticks,
Neither red nor white bricks,
But for cubits five or six
There is most goodly sardonyx,

And amber laid in rows.
It goes round about my roofs,
(If ye list ye shall have proofs)
There is good space for horse and hoofs

Plain and nothing perilous. For the fair green weather's heat, And for the smell of leaves sweet, It is no marvel, well ye weet,

A man to waxen amorous.
This I say now by my case
That spied forth of that royal place:
There I saw in no great space
Mine own sweet, both body and face

Under the fresh boughs.
In a water that was there
She wesshe her goodly body bare,
And dried it with her owen hair:
Both her arms and her knees fair,

Both bosom and brows;

Both shoulders and eke thighs, Tho she wesshe upon this wise; Ever she sighed with little sighs,

And ever she gave God thank.
Yea, God wot I can well see yet
Both her breast and her sides all wet,
And her long hair withouten let
Spead sideways like a drawing net;
Full dear bought and full far fet
Was that sweet thing there y-set;
It were a hard thing to forget
How both lips and eyen met,

Breast and breath sank. So goodly a sight as there she was, Lying looking on her glass

By wan water in green grass,

Yet saw never man.
So soft and great she was and bright
With all her body waxen white,
I woxe nigh blind to see the light
Shed out of it to left and right:
This bitter sin from that sweet sight

Between us twain began. Nathan. Now, sir, be merry anon, For ye shall have a full wise son, Goodly and great of flesh and bone:

There shall no king be such an one, I swear by Godis rood.

Therefore, lord, be merry here, And go to meat withouten fear, And hear a mass with goodly cheer; For to all folk ye shall be dear, And all folk of your blood.

Et tune dicant Laudamus.

## ST. DOROTHY.

IT hath been seen, and yet it shall be seen,

That out of tender mouths God's praise hath been

Made perfect, and with wood and simple string

He hath played music sweet as shawmplaying

To please himself with softness of all sound;

And no small thing but hath been sometime found

Full sweet of use, and no such humbleness But God hath bruised withal the sentences

And evidence of wise men witnessing:

No leaf that is so soft a hidden thing It never shall get sight of the great sun; The strength of ten has been the strength of one,

And lowliness has waxed imperious.

There was in Rome a man Theophi-

Of right great blood and gracious ways,

All noble fashions to make people glad And a soft life of pleasurable days.

He was a goodly man for one to praise, Flawless and whole upward from foot to head:

His arms were a red hawk that alway fed

On a small bird with feathers gnawed

Beaten and plucked about the bosombone

Whereby a small round fleck like fire there was:

They called it in their tongue lampadias:

This was the banner of the lordly man. In many straits of sea and reaches wan Full of quick wind, and many a shaken firth,

It had seen fighting days of either earth, Westward or east of waters Gaditane (This was the place of sea-rocks under

Spain
Called after the great praise of Hercules),

And north beyond the washing Pontic seas,

Far windy Russian places fabulous, And salt fierce tides of storm-swoln Bosphorus.

Now, as this lord came straying in Rome town,

He saw little lattice open down, And after it a press of maidens' heads That sat upon their cold small quiet beds

Talking, and played upon short-stringed lutes;

And other some ground perfume out of roots

Gathered by marvellous moons in Asia, Saffron and aloes and wild cassia,

Colored all through and smelling of the sun:

And over all these was a certain one Clothed softly, with sweet herbs about her hair,

And bosom flowerful; her face more fair

Than sudden-singing April in soft lands:

Eyed like a gracious bird, and in both hands

She held a psalter painted green and

This Theophile laughed at the heart, and said, —

"Now God so help me hither and St Paul.

As by the new time of their festival I have good will to take this maid to

wife."
And herewith fell to fancies of her life,

And soft half-thoughts that ended suddenly.

This is man's guise to please himself,

when he

Shall not see one thing of his pleasant things,

Nor with outwatch of many travailings Come to be eased of the least pain he hath

For all his love and all his foolish wrath, And all the heavy manner of his mind. Thus is he like a fisher fallen blind,

That casts his nets across the boat awry To strike the sea, but lo! he striketh

And plucks them back all broken for his pain,

And bites his beard, and casts across again,

And reaching wrong slips over in the sea.

So hath this man a strangled neck for fee,

For all his cost he chuckles in his throat.

This Theophile that little hereof wote Laid wait to hear of her what she might be:

Men told him she had name of Dorothy, And was a lady of a worthy house. Thereat this knight grew inly glorious

That he should have a love so fair of place.

She was a maiden of most quiet face, Tender of speech, and had no hardihood,

But was nigh feeble of her fearful blood:

Her mercy in her was so marvellous From her least years, that seeing her

schoolfellows
That read beside her stricken with a

She would cry sore, and say some word to God

That he would ease her fellow of his pain.

There is no touch of sun or fallen rain
That ever fell on a more gracious
thing.

In middle Rome there was in stoneworking

The church of Venus painted royally.

The chapels of it were some two or three,

In each of them her tabernacle was, And a wide window of six feet in glass Colored with all her works in red and gold.

The altars had bright cloths and cups to hold

The wine of Venus for the services, Made out of honey and crushed woodberries

That shed sweet yellow through the thick wet red,

That on high days was borne upon the head

Of Venus' priest, for any man to drink; So that in drinking he should fall to think

On some fair face, and in the thought thereof

Worship, and such should triumph in

his love. For this soft wine that did such grace

and good Was new trans-shaped and mixed with

love's own blood,
That in the fighting Trojan time was

bled; For which came such a woe to Diomed That he was stifled after in hard sea. And some said that this wine-shedding should be

Made of the falling of Adonis' blood,

That curled upon the thorns and broken wood,

And round the gold silk shoes on Venus' feet:

The taste thereof was as hot honey

And in the mouth ran soft and riotous. This was the holiness of Venus' house.

It was their worship, that in August

Twelve maidens should go through those Roman ways

Naked, and having gold across their brows,

And their hair twisted in short golden rows.

To minister to Venus in this wise: And twelve men chosen in their com-

panies To match these maidens by the altar-

stair. All in one habit, crowned upon the

hair. Among these men was chosen Theophile.

This knight went out, and prayed a little while,

Holding Queen Venus by her hands and knees:

I will give thee twelve royal images Cut in glad gold, with marvels of wrought stone,

For thy sweet priests to lean and pray

Jasper and hyacinth and chrysopras, And the strange Asian thalamite that

Hidden twelve ages under heavy sea Among the little sleepy pearls, to be A shrine lit over with soft candle-flame Burning all night red as hot brows of

shame, So thou wilt be my lady without sin.

Goddess that art all gold outside and

Help me to serve thee in thy holy

day

There shone a laughter in the singing

Round the gold-ceiled bride-bed wherein

Touched thee and had thee in your kissing wise.

Now, therefore, sweet, kiss thou my maiden's eyes

That they may open graciously towards me:

And this new fashion of thy shrine shall be

As soft with gold as thine own happy

The goddess, that was painted with face red

Between two long green tumbled sides of sea.

Stooped her neck sideways, and spake pleasantly:

Thou shalt have grace as thou art thrall of mine.

And with this came a savor of shed

wine, And plucked-out petals from a rose's head:

And softly with slow laughs of lip she said, -

Thou shalt have favor all thy days of

Then came Theophilus to Dorothy, Saying: O sweet, if one should strive or speak

Against God's ways, he gets a beaten cheek

For all his wage and shame above all men. Therefore I have no will to turn again

When God saith "go," lest a worse thing fall out.

Then she, misdoubting lest he went about

To catch her wits, made answer somewhat thus:

I have no will, my lord Theophilus,

To speak against this worthy word of yours;

Knowing how God's will in all speech endures,

That save by grace there may no thing be said.

Thou knowest, Love, that in my bearing | Then Theophile waxed light from foot to head.

And softly fell upon this answering:
It is well seen you are a chosen thing
To do God service in his gracious way.
I will that you make haste and holiday
To go next year upon the Venus stair,
Covered none else, but crowned upon
your hair,

And do the service that a maiden doth. She said: But I that am Christ's maid

were loath

To do this thing that hath such bitter name.

Thereat his brows were beaten with

sore shame,

And he came off, and said no other word.

Then his eyes chanced upon his bannerbird.

And he fell fingering at the staff of it, And laughed for wrath, and stared between his feet,

And out of a chafed heart he spake as

thus:

Lo how she japes at me Theophilus, Feigning herself a fool, and hard to love;

Yet in good time for all she boasteth of She shall be like a little beaten bird. And while his mouth was open in that

He came upon the house Janiculum, Where some went busily, and other

some Talked in the gate called the gate

glorious.
The emperor, which was one Gabalus,
Sat over all and drank chill wine alone.
To whom is come Theophilus anon,

And said as thus: Beau sire, Dieu vous aide.

And afterward sat under him, and said All this thing through as ye have wholly heard.

This Gabalus laughed thickly in his beard.

Yea, this is righteousness and maiden rule.

Truly, he said, a maid is but a fool. And japed at them as one full villanous, In a lewd wise, this heathen Gabalus, And sent his men to bind her as he

bade.

Thus have they taken Dorothy the maid,

And haled her forth as men hale pickpurses:

A little need God knows they had of this,

To hale her by her maiden gentle half. Thus went she lowly, making a soft prayer,

As one who stays the sweet wine in his mouth,

Murmuring with eased lips, and is most loath

To have done wholly with the sweet of it:

Christ king, fair Christ, that knowest all men's wit

And all the feeble fashion of my ways,
O perfect God, that from all yester
days

Abidest whole with morrows perfected, I pray thee by thy mother's holy head, Thou help me to do right, that I not

slip:
I have no speech nor strength upon my

Except thou help me, who art wise and sweet.

Do this, too, for those nails that clove thy feet,

Let me die maiden after many pains. Though I be least among thy handmaidens.

Doubtless I shall take death more sweetly thus.

Now have they brought her to King Gabalus,

Who laughed in all his throat some breathing-whiles.

By God, he said, if one should leap two miles,

He were not pained about the sides so much.

This were a soft thing for a man to touch.

Shall one so chafe that hath such little bones?

And shook his throat with thick and chuckled moans

For laughter that she had such holis

For laughter that she had such holiness.

What aileth thee, wilt thou do services? It were good fare to fare as Venus doth. Then said this lady with her maiden

mouth,

Shamefaced, and something paler in the cheek:

Now, sir, albeit my wit and will to

Give me no grace in sight of worthy men, For all my shame yet know I this again, I may not speak, nor after down-lying Rise up to take delight in lute-playing, Nor sing nor sleep, nor sit and fold my hands,

But my soul in some measure understands

God's grace laid like a garment over

For this fair God that out of strong,

sharp sea Lifted the shapely and green-colored

And hath the weight of heaven in his

hand As one might hold a bird, and under

The heavy golden planets beam by

beam Building the feasting-chambers of his

house. And the large world he holdeth with his brows,

And with the light of them astonisheth All place and time and face of life and death.

And motion of the north wind and the south.

And is the sound within his angel's mouth

Of singing words and words of thanksgiving,

And is the color of the latter spring And heat upon the summer and the

And is beginning of all things begun, And gathers in him all things to their

And with the fingers of his hand doth

The stretched-out sides of heaven like a sail,

And with his breath he maketh the red

And fills with blood faint faces of men

And with the sound between his lips are fed

Iron and fire and the white body of snow,

And blossom of all trees in places low. And small bright herbs about the little hills.

And fruit pricked softly with birds' tender bills,

And flight of foam about green fields of sea,

And fourfold strength of the great winds that be

Moved always outward from beneath his feet.

And growth of grass and growth of sheaved wheat

And all green flower of goodly-growing lands:

And all these things he gathers with his hands.

And covers all their beauty with his wings:

The same, even God that governs all these things,

Hath set my feet to be upon his ways. Now, therefore, for no painfulness of days

I shall put off this service bound on

Also, fair sir, ye know this certainly,

How God was in his flesh full chaste and meek, And gave his face to shame, and either

cheek Gave up to smiting of men tyrannous.

And here with a great voice this Gabalus

Cried out and said: By God's blood and his bones,

This were good game betwixen night and nones For one to sit and hearken to such

saws:

I were as lief fall in some big beast's jaws

As hear these women's jaw-teeth chattering;

By God a woman is the harder thing, One may not put a hook into her mouth.

Now by St. Luke I am so sore adrouth For all these saws, I must needs drink again;

But I pray God deliver all us men

From all such noise of women and their heat.

That is a noble scripture, well I weet, That likens women to an empty can; When God said that, he was a full wise

man.

I trow no man may blame him as for that.

And herewithal he drank a draught, and spat,

And said: Now shall I make an end hereof.

Come near, all men, and hearken for God's love,

And ye shall hear a jest or twain, God wot.

And spake as thus with mouth full thick and hot:

But thou do this, thou shalt be shortly slain.

Lo, sir, she said, this death and all this

I take in penance of my bitter sins.

Yea, now, quoth Gabalus, this game begins.

Lo, without sin one shall not live a span.
Lo, this is she that would not look on
man

Between her fingers folded in thwart wise.

See how her shame hath smitten in her eyes

That was so clean, she had not heard of shame.

Certes, he said, by Gabalus my name, This two years back I was not so well pleased.

This were good mirth for sick men to be eased,

And rise up whole and laugh at hearing of.

I pray thee, show us something of thy love,

Since thou wast maid thy gown is waxen wide.
Yea, maid I am, she said, and some-

what sighed, As one who thought upon the low fair

house Where she sat working, with soft bended brows

Watching her threads, among the school-maidens.

And she thought well, now God had brought her thence,
She should not come to sew her gold

again.

Then cried King Galabus upon his

To have her forth, and draw her with steel gins.

And as a man hag ridden beats and grins,

And bends his body sidelong in his bed.

So wagged he with his body and knave's head,

Gaping at her, and blowing with his breath.

And in good time he gat an evil death Out of his lewdness with his cursed wives:

His bones were hewn asunder as with knives

For his misliving, certes it is said.

But all the evil wrought upon this maid, It were full hard for one to handle it. For her soft blood was shed upon her

feet,

And all her body's color bruised and faint.

But she, as one abiding God's great saint,

Spake not nor wept for all this travail hard.

Wherefore the king commanded after ward

To slay her presently in all men's sight. And it was now an hour upon the night, And winter-time, and a few stars be-

The weather was yet feeble and all wan For beating of a weighty wind and snow.

And she came walking in soft wise and slow,

And many men with faces piteous. Then came this heavy cursing Gabalus, That swore full hard into his drunken

beard;
And faintly after without any word
Came Theophile some paces off the

king.

And in the middle of this wayfaring

Full tenderly beholding her he said:

There is no word of comfort with men dead,

Nor any face and color of things sweet; But always with lean cheeks and lifted feet

These dead men lie all aching to the blood

With bitter cold, their brows withouten hood

Beating for chill, their bodies swathed full thin:

Alas! what hire shall any have herein To give his life and get such bitterness? Also the soul going forth bodiless

Is hurt with naked cold, and no man saith

If there be house or covering for death To hide the soul that is discomforted.

Then she beholding him a little said: Alas! fair lord, ye have no wit of this; For on one side death is full poor of bliss.

And, as ye say, full sharp of bone and lean;

But on the other side is good and green, And hath soft flower of tender-colored hair

Grown on his head, and a red mouth as

As may be kissed with lips; thereto his

Is as God's face, and in a perfect place Full of all sun and color of straight boughs,

And waterheads about a painted house That hath a mile of flowers either way Outward from it, and blossom-grass of

Thickening on many a side for length of heat,

Hath God set death upon a noble seat Covered with green and flowered in the

In likeness of a great king grown full

And gentle with new temperance of blood;

And on his brows a purfled purple hood, They may not carry any golden thing; And plays some tune with subtle fingering

On a small cithern, full of tears and sleep,

weep,

And sorrow with the honey in her mouth;

And for this might of music that he doth.

Are all souls drawn toward him with great love,

And weep for sweetness of the noise thereof,

And bow to him with worship of their knees:

And all the field is thick with companies Of fair-clothed men that play on shawns and lutes,

And gather honey of the vellow fruits Between the branches waxen soft and wide:

And all this peace endures in either

Of the green land, and God beholdeth And this is girdled with a round fair

Made of red stone, and cool with heavy

leaves Grown out against it, and green blossom

cleaves To the green chinks, and lesser wall-

weed sweet, Kissing the crannies that are split with heat,

And branches where the summer draws to head.

And Theophile burnt in the cheek, and said:

Yea, could one see it, this were marvel-

I pray you, at your coming to this house, Give me some leaf of all those treebranches:

Seeing how sharp and white our weather is,

There is no green nor gracious red to

Yea, sir, she said, that shall I certainly.

And from her long sweet throat without a fleck

Undid the gold, and through her stretched-out neck

The cold axe clove, and smote away her head:

And heavy pleasure that is quick to Out of her throat the tender blood full

Fell suddenly through all her long soft hair.

And with good speed for hardness of the air

Each man departed to his house again.

Lol as fair color in the face of

At seed-time of their blood, or in such

As a thing seen increaseth in men's eyes,

Caught first far off by sickly fits of sight, —

So a word said, if one shall hear aright, Abides against the season of its growth. This Theophile went slowly, as one doth

That is not sure for sickness of his feet;

And, counting the white stonework of the street.

Tears fell out of his eyes for wrath and love,

Making him weep more for the shame

Than for true pain: so went he half a mile.

And women mocked him, saying: Theophile,

Lo, she is dead; what shall a woman have

That loveth such an one? so Christ me save.

I were as lief to love a man new-hung. Surely this man has bitten on his tongue,

This makes him sad and writhled in his face.

And when they came upon the paven place

That was called sometime the place amorous,

There came a child before Theophilus, Bearing a basket, and said suddenly: Fair sir, this is my mistress Dorothy

That sends you gifts; and with this he was gone.

In all this earth there is not such an one

For color and straight stature made so fair.

The tender growing gold of his pure hair

Was as wheat growing, and his mouth as flame.

God called him Holy after his own name.

With gold cloth like free hurning he

With gold cloth like fire burning he was clad.

But for the fair green basket that he had,

It was filled up with heavy white and red;
Great roses stained still where the first

rose bled,

Burning at heart for shame their heart

withholds;
And the sad color of strong mari-

golds
That have the sun to kiss their lips for

love;
The flower that Venus' hair is woven of.

The color of fair apples in the sun,
Late peaches gathered when the heat

was done,

And the slain air got breath: and after

And the slain air got breath; and after these

The fair faint-headed poppies drunk with ease,

And heaviness of hollow lilies red.

Then cried they all that saw these things, and said

It was God's doing, and was marvellous.

And in brief while this knight The-

ophilus
Is waxen full of faith, and witnesseth
Before the king, of God and love and

death,

For which the king bade hang him

presently.

A gallows of a goodly piece of tree This Gabalus hath made to hang him

Forth of this world lo Theophile is

With a wried neck — God give us better fare

Than his that hath a twisted throat to wear!

But truly for his love God hath him brought

There where his heavy body grieves him nought,

Nor all the people plucking at his feet. But in his face his lady's face is sweet, And through his lips her kissing lips are gone.

God send him peace, and joy of such

an one l

This is the story of St. Dorothy. I will you of your mercy pray for me Because I wrote these sayings for your grace,

That I may one day see her in the face.

#### THE TWO DREAMS.

#### (FROM BOCCACCIO.)

I WILL that if I say a heavy thing Your tongues forgive me; seeing ye know that spring

Has flecks and fits of pain to keep her

sweet.

And walks somewhile with winter bitten

Moreover it sounds often well to let One string, when ye play music, keep at fret

The whole song through; one petal that is dead

Confirms the roses, be they white or red; Dead sorrow is not sorrowful to hear As the thick noise that breaks mid

weeping were;

The sick sound aching in a lifted throat Turns to sharp silver of a perfect note; And though the rain falls often, and with rain

Late autumn falls on the old red leaves

like pain,

I deem that God is not disquieted.

Also while men are fed with wine and bread. They shall be fed with sorrow at his

hand. There grew a rose-garden in Florence

More fair than many; all red summers through

The leaves smelt sweet and sharp of rain, and blew

Sideways with tender wind; and there-

in fell Sweet sound wherewith the green waxed audible,

As a bird's will to sing disturbed his throat,

And set the sharp wings forward like a

Pushed through soft water, moving his brown side

Smooth-shapen as a maid's, and shook with pride

His deep warm bosom, till the heavy sun's

Set face of heat stopped all the songs at once.

The ways were clean to walk, and delicate;

And when the windy white of March grew late,

Before the trees took heart to face the

With ravelled raiment of lean winter

The roots were thick and hot with hollow grass.

Some roods away a lordly house there was,

Cool with broad courts and latticed passage wet

From rush-flowers and lilies ripe to

Sown close among the strewings of the floor: And either wall of the slow corridor

Was dim with deep device of gracious things;

Some angel's steady mouth and weight of wings

Shut to the side; or Peter with straight

And beard cut black against the aureole That spanned his head from nape to crown; there

Mary's gold hair, thick to the girdle-

Wherein was bound a child with tender

Or the broad cross with blood nigh brown on it.

Within this house a righteous lord abode.

Ser Averardo; patient of his mood, And just of judgment; and to child he

A maid so sweet that her mere sight made glad

Men sorrowing, and unbound the brows of hate;

And where she came, the lips that pain made strait

Waxed warm and wide, and from untender grew

Tender as those that sleep brings patience to.

Such long locks had she, that with knee to chin

She might have wrapped and warmed her feet therein.

Right seldom fell her face on weeping

Gold hair she had, and golden-colored eyes,

Filled with clear light and fire and large repose

Like a fair hound's; no man there is but knows

Her face was white, and thereto she was tall:

In no wise lacked there any praise at all

To her most perfect and pure maidenhood;

No sin I think there was in all her blood.

She, where a gold grate shut the roses in,

Dwelt daily through deep summer weeks, through green

Flushed hours of rain upon the leaves; and there

Love made him room and space to worship her With tender worship of bowed knees,

and wrought

Such pleasure as the pained sense pal-

Such pleasure as the pained sense palates not

For weariness, but at one taste undoes The heart of its strong sweet, is ravenous

Of all the hidden honey; words and sense

Fail through the tune's imperious prevalence.

In a poor house this lover kept apart, Long communing with patience next his heart

If love of his might move that face at all,

Tuned evenwise with colors musical;

Then after length of days he said thus: "Love.

For love's own sake and for the love thereof,

Let no harsh words untune your gracious mood;

For good it were, if any thing be good,

To comfort me in this pain's plague of mine;

Seeing thus, how neither sleep nor bread nor wine

Seems pleasant to me, yea no thing that is

Seems pleasant to me; only I know this,

Love's ways are sharp for palms of piteous feet

To travel, but the end of such is sweet: Now do with me as seemeth you the best."

She mused a little, as one holds his guest

By the hand musing, with her face borne down:

Then said "Year though such hitter

Then said, "Yea, though such bitter seed be sown, Have no more care of all that you have

said; Since if there is no sleep will bind your

head, Lo, I am fain to help you certainly:

Christ knoweth, sir, if I would have you die;

There is no pleasure when a man is dead."

Thereat he kissed her hands and yellow head,

And clipped her fair long body many times:

I have no wit to shape in written rhymes A scanted tithe of this great joy they had.

They were too near love's secret to be glad,

As whoso deems the core will surely melt

From the warm fruit his lips caress, hath felt

Some bitter kernel where the teeth shut hard;

Or as sweet music sharpens after ward,

Being half disrelished both for sharp and sweet;

As sea-water, having killed over-heat In a man's body, chills it with faint ache;

So their sense, burdened only for love's sake,

Failed for pure love; yet so time served their wit,

They saved each day some gold reserves of it.

Being wiser in love's riddle than such be

Whom fragments feed with his chance charity.

All things felt sweet were felt sweet overmuch;

The rose-thorn's prickle dangerous to touch,

And flecks of fire in the thin leafshadows;

Too keen the breathed honey of the rose.

Its red too harsh a weight on feasted eyes;

They were so far gone in love's histo-

Beyond all shape and color and mere breath,

Where pleasure has for kinsfolk sleep and death,

And strength of soul and body waxen blind

For weariness, and flesh entoiled with mind,

When the keen edge of sense foretasteth sin.

Even this green place the summer caught them in

Seemed half deflowered and sick with beaten leaves In their strayed eyes; these gold flower-

fumed eves
Burnt out to make the sun's love-offer-

ing,
The midnoon's prayer, the rose's thanks-

giving, The trees weight burdening the

strengthless air,
The shape of her stilled eyes, her colored hair,

Her body's balance from the moving feet, —

All this, found fair, lacked yet one grain of sweet

It had some warm weeks back: so perisheth

On May's new lip the tender April breath:

So those same walks the wind sowed lilies in

All April through, and all their latter

Of languid leaves whereon the autumn blows,—

The dead red raiment of the last year's rose.—

The last year's laurel, and the last year's love,

Fade, and grow things that death grows weary of.

What man will gather in red summertime

The fruit of some obscure and hoars

Heard last midwinter, taste the heart in it,

Mould the smooth semitones afresh, refit The fair limbs ruined, flush the dead blood through

With color, make all broken beauties new

For love's new lesson — shall not such find pain

When the marred music laboring in his brain

Frets him with sweet sharp fragments, and lets slip

One word that might leave satisfied his lip, —

One touch that might put fire in all the chords?

This was her pain: to miss from all sweet words

Some taste of sound, diverse and delicate, —

Some speech the old love found out to compensate

For seasons of shut lips and drowsiness;

Some grace, some word the old love found out to bless

Passionless months and undelighted weeks.

The flowers had lost their summer scented cheeks,

4

Their lips were no more sweet than daily breath:

The vear was plagued with instances of death.

So fell it, these were sitting in cool

With leaves about, and many a bird there was

Where the green shadow thickliest impleached

Soft fruit and writhen spray and blossom bleached

Dry in the sun or washed with rains to white:

Her girdle was pure silk, the bosom bright

With purple as purple water and gold wrought in.

One branch had touched with dusk her lips and chin,

Made violet of the throat, abashed with shade

The breast's bright plaited work: but nothing fraved

The sun's large kiss on the luxurious hair.

Her beauty was new color to the air.

And music to the silent many birds. Love was an-hungered for some perfect words

To praise her with; but only her low

"Andrevuola" came thrice, and thrice put shame

In her clear cheek, so fruitful with new

That for pure love straightway shame's self was dead.

Then with lids gathered as who late had wept,

She began saying, "I have so little slept,

My lids drowse now against the very

Yea, the brain aching with a dream begun Beats like a fitful blood; kiss but both

brows. And you shall pluck my thoughts grown

dangerous

Almost away." He said thus, kissing And fair soft leaves that waxed and tnem:

"O sole sweet thing that God is glad to name.

My one gold gift, if dreams be sharp and sore

Shall not the waking time increase much more

With taste and sound, sweet evesight or sweet scent?

Has any heat too hard and insolent Burnt bare the tender married leaves.

undone The maiden grass shut under from the

sun?

Where in this world is room enough for pain?"

The feverish finger of love had touched again

Her lips with happier blood; the pain lay meek

In her fair face, nor altered lip nor cheek

With pallor or with pulse; but in her mouth

Love thirsted as a man wayfaring doth, Making it humble as weak hunger is. She lay close to him, bade do this and

this, Say that, sing thus: then almost weep-

ing-ripe Crouched, then laughed low. As one that fain would wipe

The old record out of old things done and dead,

She rose, she heaved her hands up, and waxed red

For wilful heart and blameless fear of blame;

Saying, "Though my wits be weak, this is no shame

For a poor maid whom love so punish-

With heats of hesitation and stopped breath

That with my dreams I live yet heavily For pure sad heart and faith's humility. Now be not wroth, and I will show you this.

"Methought our lips upon their

second kiss Met in this place, and a fair day we

were not sad

With shaken rain, or bitten through with drouth;

When I, beholding ever how your mouth

Waited for mine, the throat being fallen back,

Saw crawl thereout a live thing flaked with black

Specks of brute slime and leper-colored scale,

A devil's hide with foul flame-writhen grail

Fashioned where hell's heat festers loathsomest:

And that brief speech may ease me of the rest.

Thus were you slain and eaten of the

My waked eyes felt the new day shud-

dering
On their low lids, felt the whole east so beat.

Pant with close pulse of such a plaguestruck heat,

As if the palpitating dawn drew breath For horror, breathing between life and death,

Till the sun sprang blood-bright and violent."

So finishing, her soft strength wholly spent,

She gazed each way, lest some brutehooved thing,

The timeless travail of hell's child-bearing,

Should threat upon the sudden: whereat he,
For relish of her tasted misery

ror relish of her tasted misery

And tender little thornprick of her pain,

Laughed with mere love. What lover among men

But hath his sense fed sovereignly 'twixt whiles With tears and covered eyelids and sick

smiles
And soft disaster of a pained face?

What pain established in so sweet a place,

But the plucked leaf of it smells fragrantly?

What color burning man's wide-open eye

But may be pleasurably seen? what sense

Keeps in its hot sharp extreme violence

No savor of sweet things? The bereaved blood

And emptied flesh in their most broken mood

Fail not so wholly, famish not when thus

Past honey keeps the starved lip covetous.

Therefore this speech from a glad mouth began,

Breathed in her tender hair and temples

Like one prolonged kiss while the lips had breath:

"Sleep, that abides in vassalage of death

And in death's service wears out half his age,

Hath his dreams full of deadly vassalage, Shadow and sound of things ungra-

cious;
Fair shallow faces, hooded bloodless

brows,
And mouths past kissing; yea, myself

have had As harsh a dream as holds your eyelids

"This dream I tell you came three nights ago:

In full mid sleep I took a whim to know
How sweet things might be; so I turned
and thought;

But save my dream all sweet availed me

First came a smell of pounded spice and scent

Such as God ripens in some continent Of utmost amber in the Syrian sea;

And breaths as though some costly rose could be

Spoiled slowly, wasted by some bitter fire

To burn the sweet out leaf by leaf, and tire

The flower's poor heart with heat and waste, to make

Strong magic for some perfumed woman's sake. Then a cool naked sense beneath my feet
Of bud and blossom; and sound of

veins that beat As if a lute should play of its own

heart

And fearfully, not smitten of either part;

And all my blood it filled with sharp and sweet

As gold swoln grain fills out the husked wheat;

So I rose naked from the bed, and stood

Counting the mobile measure in my blood

Some pleasant while, and and through each limb there came

Swift little pleasures pungent as a flame, Felt in the thrilling flesh and veins as much

As the outer curls that feel the comb's first touch

Thrill to the roots and shiver as from fire:

And blind between my dream and my desire

I seemed to stand, and held my spirit still

Lest this should cease. A child whose fingers spill

Honey from cells forgotten of the bee Is less afraid to stir the hive and see Some wasp's bright back inside, than I to feel

Some finger-touch disturb the flesh like steel.

I prayed thus: Let me catch a secret here

So sweet, it sharpens the sweet taste of fear,

And takes the mouth with edge of wine;
I would

Have here some color and smooth shape as good

As those in heaven whom the chief garden hides

With low grape-blossom veiling their white sides,

And lesser tendrils that so bind and blind

Their eyes and feet, that if one come behind

To touch their hair they see not, neither fly;

This would I see in heaven, and not die. So praying, I had nigh cried out and knelt,

So wholly my prayer filled me: till I felt

In the dumb night's warm weight of glowing gloom

Somewhat that altered all my sleeping-room,

And made it like a green low place wherein

Maids mix to bathe: one sets her small warm chin

Against a ripple, that the angry pearl
May flow like flame about her: the next
curl

Dips in some eddy colored of the sun To wash the dust well out; another one Holds a straight ankle in her hand and swings

With lavish body sidelong, so that rings Of sweet fierce water, swollen and splendid, fail

All round her fine and floated body pale,

Swayed flower-fashion, and her balanced side

Swerved edgeways lets the weight of water slide, As taken in some underflow of sea

Swerves the banked gold of sea-flowers; but she

Pulls down some branch to keep her perfect head

Clear of the river: even from wall to bed,

I tell you, was my room transfigured so. Sweet, green and warm it was, nor could one know

If there were walls or leaves, or if there
was
No hed's green curtain but mere gentle

No bed's green curtain, but mere gentle grass.

There were set also hard against the feet

Gold plates with honey and green grapes to eat,

With the cool water's noise to hear in rhymes:

And a wind warmed me full of furze

And all hot sweets the heavy summer fills

To the round brim of smooth cupshapen hills.

Next the grave walking of a woman's feet

Made my veins hesitate, and gracious heat

Made thick the lids and leaden on mine eyes:

And I thought ever, surely it were wise Not yet to see her: this may last (who knows?)

Five minutes; the poor rose is twice a

Because it turns a face to her, the wind Sings that way; hath this woman ever sinned.

I wonder? as a boy with apple-rind,

I played with pleasures, made them to my mind,

Changed each ere tasting. When she came indeed,

First her hair touched me, then I grew to feed

On the sense of her hand; her mouth at last

Touched me between the cheek and lip,

and past

Over my face with kisses here and

there Sown in and out across the eyes and

hair.
Still I said nothing; till she set her

More close and harder on the kissingplace,

And her mouth caught like a snake's mouth, and stung

So faint and tenderly, the fang scarce clung
More than a bird's foot: yet a wound

it grew,
A great one, let this red mark witness

you
Under the left breast; and the stroke

thereof
So clove my sense that I woke out of

love,
And knew not what this dream was, nor

had wit;
But now God knows if I have skill of it."

Hereat she laid one palm against her lips

To stop their trembling; as when water slips

Out of a beak-mouthed vessel with faint noise,

And chuckles in the narrowed throat, and cloys

The carven rims with murmuring, so came

Words in her lips with no word right of them,

A beaten speech thick and disconsolate, Till his smile ceasing waxed compassionate

Of her sore fear that grew from any thing, —

The sound of the strong summer thickening

In heated leaves of the smooth appletrees:

The day's breath felt about the ashbranches,

And noises of the noon whose weight still grew On the hot heavy-headed flowers, and

drew

Their red mouths open till the roseheart ached; For eastward all the crowding rose was

slaked And soothed with shade: but westward

all its growth Seemed to breathe hard with heat as a

man doth Who feels his temples newly feverous. And even with such motion in her

As that man hath in whom sick days begin,

She turned her throat and spake, her voice being thin

As a sick man's, sucden and tremulous; "Sweet, if this end be come indeed on us, Let us love more;" and held his mouth with hers.

As the first sound of flooded hill-waters Is heard by people of the meadow-grass, Or ever a wandering waif of ruin pass With whirling stones and foam of the brown stream

Flaked with fierce yellow: so behold ing him

She felt before tears came her eyelids wet,

Saw the face deadly thin where life was yet,

Heard his throat's harsh last moan before it clomb:

And he, with close mouth passionate and dumb.

Burned at her lips: so lay they without speech,

Each grasping other, and the eyes of

Fed in the other's face: till suddenly He cried out with a little broken cry This word, "O help me, sweet, I am

but dead!"
And even so saying, the color of fair

, red

Was gone out of his face, and his blood's beat

Fell, and stark death made sharp his upward feet

And pointed hands; and without moan he died.

Pain smote her sudden in the brows and side,

Strained her lips open, and made burn her eyes:

For the pure sharpness of her miseries She had no heart's pain, but mere body's wrack.

But at the last her beaten blood drew back

back Slowly upon her face, and her stunned

brows
Suddenly grown aware and piteous
Gathered themselves, her eyes shone,

her hard breath Came as though one nigh dead came

back from death;
Her lips throbbed, and life trembled

through her hair.

And in brief while she thought to

And in brief while she thought to bury there The dead man, that her love might lie

with him
In a sweet bed under the rose-roots

dim
And soft earth round the branchèd

apple-trees,
Full of hushed heat and heavy with
great ease,

And no man entering divide him thence.

Wherefore she bade one of her handmaidens

To be her help to do upon this wise.

And saying so the tears out of her
eves

Fell without noise, and comforted her heart:

Yea, her great pain eased of the sorest

Began to soften in her sense of it.

There under all the little branches sweet The place was shapen of his burial: They shed thereon no thing funereal,

But colored leaves of latter rose-blossom,

Stems of soft grass, some withered red and some

Fair and flesh-blooded; and spoil splendider

Of marigold and great spent sunflower.

And afterwards she came back without word

To her own house; two days went, and the third

Went, and she showed her father of this thing.

And for great grief of her soul's travailing

He gave consent she should endure in peace

Till her life's end; yea, till her time should cease,

She should abide in fellowship of pain And having lived a holy year or twain She died of pure waste heart and weariness.

And for love's honor in her love's distress

This word was written over her tomb's head:

"Here dead she lieth, for whose sake Love is dead."

## AHOLIBAH.

In the beginning God made thee A woman well to look upon,

Thy tender body as a tree

Whereon cool wind hath always

Till the clean branches be well grown.

There was none like thee in the land;
The girls that were thy bondwomen

Did bind thee with a purple band Upon thy forehead, that all men Should know thee for God's handmaiden.

Strange raiment clad thee like a bride, With silk to wear on hands and feet,

And plates of gold on either side:
Wine made thee glad, and thou
didst eat

Honey, and choice of pleasant meat.

And fishers in the middle sea Did get thee sea-fish and sea-weeds

In color like the robes on thee;
And curious work of plated reeds,
And wools wherein live purple
bleeds.

And round the edges of thy cup Men wrought thee marvels out of

gold, Strong snakes with lean throats lifted

up, Large eyes whereon the brows had

hold, And scaly things their slime kept

For thee they blew soft winds in flutes, And ground sweet roots for cunning scent;

cold.

Made slow because of many lutes,
The wind among thy chambers
went

Wherein no light was violent.

God called thy name Aholibah,
His tabernacle being in thee,
A witness through waste Asia;
Thou wert a tent sewn cunningly
With gold and colors of the sea.

God gave thee gracious ministers And all their work who plait and weave:

The cunning of embroiderers
That sew the pillow to the sleeve,
And likeness of all things that live.

Thy garments upon thee were fair
With scarlet and with yellow
thread;

Also the weaving of thine hair
Was as fine gold upon thy head,
And thy silk shoes were sewn with
red.

All sweet things he bade sift, and ground

As a man grindeth wheat in mills
With strong wheels alway going round;
He gave thee corn, and grass that
fills
The cattle on a thousand hills.

The wine of many seasons fed
Thy mouth, and made it fair and
clean;

Sweet oil was poured out on thy head, And ran down like cool rain between

The strait close locks it melted in.

The strong men and the captains knew
Thy chambers wrought and fashioned

With gold and covering of blue, And the blue raiment of thine head Who satest on a stately bed.

All these had on their garments wrought The shape of beasts and creeping things.

The body that availeth not, Flat backs of worms and veined

And the lewd bulk that sleeps and stings.

Also the chosen of the years, The multitude being at ease,

With sackbuts and with dulcimers
And noise of shawms and psalteries,
Made mirth within the ears of these.

But as a common woman doth,

Thou didst think evil and devise;
The sweet smell of thy breast and
mouth.

Thou madest as the harlot's wise, And there was painting on thine eyes. Yea, in the woven guest-chamber And by the painted passages

Where the strange, gracious paintings were,

State upon state of companies, There came on thee the lust of these.

Because of shapes on either wall Sea-colored from some rare blue shell

At many a Tyrian interval, Horsemen on horses, girdled well, Delicate and desirable, —

Thou saidest: I am sick of love: Stay with me flagons, comfort me With apples, for my pain thereof, Till my hands gather in his tree

That fruit wherein my lips would

Yea, saidest thou, I will go up When there is no more shade than

May cover with a hollow cup, And make my bed against the sun Till my blood's violence be done.

Thy mouth was leant upon the wall Against the painted mouth, thy chin Touched the hair's painted curve and fall;

Thy deep throat, fallen lax and

Worked as the blood's beat worked therein.

Therefore, O thou Aholibah, God is not glad because of thee; And thy fine gold shall pass away Like those fair coins of ore that be Washed over by the middle sea.

Then will one make thy body bare To strip it of all gracious things, And pluck the cover from thine hair, And break the gift of many kings, Thy wrist-rings and thine anklerings.

Likewise the man whose body joins To thy smooth body, as was said, Who hath a girdle on his loins, And dved attire upon his head, -The same who, seeing, worshipped,

Because thy face was like the face Of a clean maiden that smells

Because thy gait was as the pace Of one that opens not her feet, And is not heard within the street:

Even he, O thou Aholibah, Made separate from thy desire, Shall cut thy nose and ears away, And bruise thee for thy body's hire, And burn the residue with fire.

Then shall the heathen people say, The multitude being at ease; Lo, this is that Aholibah Whose name was blown among strange seas, Grown old with soft adulteries.

Also her bed was made of green, Her windows beautiful for glass, That she had made her bed between: Yea, for pure lust her body was Made like white summer-colored grass.

Her raiment was a strong man's spoil; Upon a table by a bed She set mine incense and mine oil To be the beauty of her head, In chambers walled about with red.

Also between the walls she had Fair faces of strong men portrayed; All girded round the loins, and clad With several cloths of woven braid And garments marvellously made.

Therefore the wrath of God shall be Set as a watch upon her way: And whoso findeth by the sea Blown dust of bones will hardly say If this were that Aholibah.

## MADONNA MIA.

UNDER green apple-boughs
That never a storm will rouse,
My lady hath her house
Between two bowers;
In either of the twain,
Red roses full of rain;
She hath for bondwomen
All kind of flowers.

She hath no handmaid fair
To draw her curled gold hair
Through rings of gold that bear
Her whole hair's weight;
She hath no maids to stand
Gold-clothed on either hand:
In all the great green land
None is so great.

She hath no more to wear
But one white hood of vair
Drawn over eyes and hair,
Wrought with strange gold,
Made for some great queen's head,
Some fair great queen since dead;
And one strait gown of red
Against the cold.

Beneath her eyelids deep Love lying seems asleep, Love, swift to wake, to weep, To laugh, to gaze; Her breasts are like white birds, And all her gracious words As water-grass to herds In the June-days.

To her all dews that fall And rains are musical; Her flowers are fed from all, Her joy from these; In the deep-feathered firs Their gift of joy is hers, In the least breath that stirs Across the trees.

She grows with greenest leaves, Ripens with reddest sheaves, Forgets, remembers, grieves, And is not sad; The quiet lands and skies Leave light upon her eyes: None knows her, weak or wise, Or tired or glad.

None knows, none understands, What flowers are like her hands; Though you should search all lands Wherein time grows, What snows are like her feet, Though his eyes burn with heat Through gazing on my sweet, Yet no man knows.

Only this thing is said:
That white and gold and red,
God's three chief words, man's bread
And oil and wine,
Were given her for dowers,
And kingdom of all hours,
And grace of goodly flowers
And various vine.

This is my lady's praise:
God after many days
Wrought her in unknown ways,
In sunset lands.
This was my lady's birth:
God gave her might and mirth,
And laid his whole sweet earth
Between her hands.

Under deep apple-boughs My lady bath her house; She wears upon her brows The flower thereof; All saying but what God saith To her is as vain breath; She is more strong than death, Being strong as love.

## THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

WE were ten maidens in the green corn, Small red leaves in the mill-water: Fairer maidens never were born, Apples of gold for the king's daugh ter. We were ten maidens by a well-head, Small white birds in the mill-water: Sweeter maidens never were wed, Rings of red for the king's daughter.

The first to spin, the second to sing, Seeds of wheat in the mill-water; The third may was a goodly thing, White bread and brown for the king's daughter.

The fourth to sew, and the fifth to play, Fair green weed in the mill-water; The sixth may was a goodly may, White wine and red for the king's daughter.

The seventh to woo, the eighth to wed, Fair thin reeds in the mill-water; The ninth had gold work on her head, Honey in the comb for the king's daughter.

The ninth had gold work round her hair,

Fallen flowers in the mill-water;
The tenth may was goodly and fair,
Golden gloves for the king's daughter.

We were ten maidens in a field green,
Fallen fruit in the mill-water:
Fairer maidens never have been,
Golden sleeves for the king's daughter.

By there comes the king's young son,
A little wind in the mill-water;

"Out of ten maidens ye'll grant me one,"
A crown of red for the king's daughter.

"Out of ten mays ye'll give me the best,"

A little rain in the mill-water;
A bed of yellow straw for all the rest,
A bed of gold for the king's daughter.

He's ta'en out the goodliest,
Rain that rains in the mill-water;
A comb of yellow shell for all the rest,
A comb of gold for the king's daughter.

He's made her bed to the goodliest, Wind and hail in the mill-water; A grass girdle for all the rest, A girdle of arms for the king's daughter.

He's set his heart to the goodliest, Snow that snows in the mill-water; Nine little kisses for all the rest, An hundredfold for the king's daughter.

He's ta'en his leave at the goodliest, Broken boats in the mill-water; Golden gifts for all the rest, Sorrow of heart for the king's daugh-

"Ye'll make a grave for my fair body," Running rain in the mill-water; "And ye'll streek my brother at the side of me."

The pains of hell for the king's daugh-

## MAY JANET.

(BRETON.)

"STAND up, stand up, thou May Janet, And go to the wars with me." He's drawn her by both hands, With her face against the sea.

"He that strews red shall gather white, He that sows white reap red, Before your face and my daughter's Meet in a marriage-bed.

"Gold coin shall grow in the yellow field,

Green corn in the green sea-water, And red fruit grow of the rose's red, Ere your fruit grow in her."

"But I shall have her by land," he said,
"Or I shall have her by sea,
Or I shall have her by strong treason
And no grace go with me."

He's rent her gown from her,

He's ta'en the smock round her body, Cast in the sea-water.

The captain's drawn her by both sides Out of the fair green sea:

"Stand up, stand up, thou May Janet, And come to the war with me."

The first town they came to, There was a blue bride-chamber; He clothed her on with silk, And belted her with amber.

The second town they came to,
The bridesmen feasted knee to knee;
He clothed her on with silver,
A stately thing to see.

The third town they came to,

The bridesmaids all had gowns of gold;

He clothed her on with purple, A rich thing to behold.

The last town they came to,
He clothed her white and red,
With a green flag either side of her
And a gold flag overhead.

## THE BLOODY SON.

(FINNISH.)

"O WHERE have ye been the morn sae late,

My merry son, come tell me hither? O where have ye been the morn sae late? And I wot I hae but anither."

"By the water-gate, by the water-gate, O dear mither."

"And whatten kin' o' wark had ye there to make,

My merry son, come tell me hither?

And whatten kin' o' wark had ye there
to make?

And I wot I hae but anither."

"I watered my steeds with water frae the lake,

O dear mither."

"Why is your coat sae fouled the day, My merry son, come tell me hither?

Why is your coat sae fouled the day?
And I wot I hae but anither."

"The steeds wer stamping sair by the weary banks of clay,
O dear mither."

"And where gat ye that sleeves of

My merry son, come tell me hither? And where gat ye thae sleeves of red? And I wot I hae but anither."

"I have slain my ae brither by the weary water-head,

O dear mither."

"And where will ye gang to mak your mend,

My merry son, come tell me hither? And where will ye gang to mak your mend?

And I wot I hae not anither."

"The warldis way, to the warldis end, O dear mither."

"And what will ye leave your father dear,

My merry son, come tell me hither?
And what will ye leave your father
dear?

And I wot I hae not anither."

"The wood to fell and the logs to bear, For he'll never see my body mair, O dear mither."

"And what will ye leave your mither dear,

My merry son, come tell me hither?
And what will ye leave your mither dear?

And I wot I hae not anither."

"The wool to card and the wool to

For ye'll never see my body mair, O dear mither."

"And what will ye leave for your wife to take,

My merry son, come tell me hither? And what will ye leave for your wife to take?

And I wot I hae not anither."

"A goodly gown and a fair new make, For she'll do nae mair for my body's sake,

O dear mither."

"And what will ye leave your young son fair,

My merry son, come tell me hither?

And what will ye leave your young son fair?

And I wot ye hae not anither."

"A twiggen school-rod for his body to bear,

Though it garred him greet he'll get nae mair,

O dear mither."

"And what will ye leave your little daughter sweet,

My merry son, come tell me hither? And what will ye leave your little daughter sweet?

And I wot ye hae not anither."

"Wild mulberries for her mouth to eat,

She'll get nae mair though it garred her greet,

O dear mither."

"And when will ye come back frae roamin',

My merry son, come tell me hither?

And when will ye come back frae
roamin'?

And I wot I hae not anither."

"When the sunrise out of the north is comen,

O dear mither."

"When shall the sunrise on the north side be,

My merry son, come tell me hither?
When shall the sunrise on the north side be?

And I wot I hae not anither."

"When chuckie-stanes shall swim in the sea,

O dear mither."

"When shall stanes in the sea swim, My merry son, come tell me hither? When shall stanes in the sea swim? And I wot I hae not anither." "When birdies' feathers are as lead

O dear mither."

"When shall feathers be as lead, My merry son, come tell me hither? When shall feathers be as lead?

And I wot I hae not anither."
"When God shall judge between the quick and dead,

O dear mither."

## THE SEA-SWALLOWS

THIS fell when Christmas lights were done,

Red rose leaves will never make wine;

But before the Easter lights begun;

The ways are sair fra the Till to the Tyne.

Two lovers sat where the rowan blows, And all the grass is heavy and fine.

By the gathering place of the sea-swallows

When the wind brings them over Tyne.

Blossom of broom will never make bread.

Red rose leaves will never make wine;

Between her brows she is grown red,
That was full white in the fields by
Tyne.

"O what is this thing ye have on, Show me now, sweet daughter of mine?"

"O father, this is my little son

That I found hid in the sides of Tyne.

"O what will ye give my son to eat, Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Fen-water and adder's meat,
The ways are sair fra' the Till to the
Tyne."

"Or what will ye get my son to wear, Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"A weed and a web of nettle's hair, The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Or what will ye take to line his bed, Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Two black stones at the kirk-wall's

The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Or what will ye give my son for land, Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Three girl's paces of red sand,

The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Or what will ye give me for my son, Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Six times to kiss his young mouth

The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne.

"But what have ye done with the bearing-bread,

And what have ye made of the washing-wine?

Or where have ye made your bearing-

To bear a son in the sides of Tyne?"

"The bearing-bread is soft and new, There is no soil in the straining wine; The bed was made between green and blue,

It stands full soft by the sides of Tyne.

"The fair grass was my bearing-bread, The well-water my washing-wine;

The low leaves were my bearing-bed, And that was best in the sides of Tyne."

"O daughter, if ye have done this thing, I wot the greater grief is mine;

This was a bitter child-bearing, When ye were got by the sides of Tyne.

"About the time of sea-swallows

That fly full thick by six and nine, Ye'll have my body out of the house, To bury me by the sides of Tyne.

"Set nine stones by the wall for twain, Red rose leaves will never make wine:

For the bed I take will measure ten, The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne.

"Tread twelve girl's paces out for

three, Red rose leaves will never make wine;

For the pit I made has taken me, The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

## THE YEAR OF LOVE.

THERE were four loves that one by one, Following the seasons and the sun, Passed over without tears, and fell Away without farewell.

The first was made of gold and tears, The next of aspen-leaves and fears, The third of rose-boughs and rose-roots, The last love of strange fruits.

These were the four loves faded. Hold Some minutes fast the time of gold When our lips each way clung and clove

To a face full of love.

The tears inside our eyelids met, Wrung forth with kissing, and wept wet The faces cleaving each to each Where the blood served for speech.

The second, with low patient brows Bound under aspen-colored boughs And eyes made strong and grave with sleep

And yet too weak to weep;

The third, with eager mouth at ease Fed from late autumn honey, lees Of scarce gold left in latter cells With scattered flower-smells,—

Hair sprinkled over with spoilt sweet Of ruined roses, wrists and feet Slight-swathed, as grassy girdled sheaves

Hold in stray poppy-leaves;

The fourth, with lips whereon has bled Some great pale fruit's slow color, shed From the rank bitter husk whence drips Faint blood between her lips,—

Made of the heat of whole great Junes Burning the blue dark round their moons (Each like a mown red marigold), So hard the flame keeps hold,—

These are burnt thoroughly away. Only the first holds out a day Beyond these latter loves that were Made of mere heat and air.

And now the time is winterly
The first love fades too: none will see,
Whan April warms the world anew,
The place wherein love grew.

# THE LAST ORACLE. (A. D. 361.)

είπαι τῷ βασιλῆί, χαμαὶ πέσε δαίδαλος αὐλά \* οὐκει. Φοῖβος ἔχει καλυβαν, οὐ μάντιδα δάφνην, οὐ πογὰν λαλέουσαν \* ἀπέσβετο και λάλον ὕδωρ.

οῦ πογὰν λαλέουσαν \* ἀπέσβετο και λάλον ὕδωρ. YEARS have risen and fallen in darkness or in twilight,

Ages waxed and waned that knew not thee nor thine.

White the world sought light by night and sought not thy light,

Since the sad last pilgrim left thy dark mid shrine.

Dak the shrine, and dumb the fount of song thence welling,

S re for words more sad than tears of blood, that said:

Tell he king, on earth has fallen the glorious dwelling,

And the water-springs that spake are quenched and dead.

Not a cell is left the god, no roof, no cover;

In his hand the prophet laurel flowers no more.

And the great king's high sad heart, thy true last lover,

Felt thine answer pierce and cleave it to the core.

And he bowed down his hopeless

In the drift of the wild world's tide,

And dying, Thou hast conquered, he said,

Galilwan; he said it, and died.

And the world that was thine and was ours

When the Graces took hands with the Hours

Grew cold as a winter wave

In the wind from a wide-mouthed grave,

As a gulf wide open to swallow
The light that the world held dear.
O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
Destroyer and healer, hear!

Age on age thy mouth was mute, thy face was hidden,

And the lips and eyes that loved thee blind and dumb;

Song forsook their tongues that held thy name forbidden,

Light their eyes that saw the strange god's kingdom come.

Fire for light and hell for heaven and psalms for pæans Filled the clearest eyes and lips most

sweet of song,

When for chant of Greeks the wail of Galilæans

Made the whole world moan with hymns of wrath and wrong.

Yea, not yet we see thee, father, as they saw thee,

They that worshipped when the world was theirs and thine,

They whose words had power by thine own power to draw thee

Down from heaven till earth seemed more than heaven divine.

For the shades are about us that hover

When darkness is half withdrawn, And the skirts of the dead night

The face of the live new dawn. For the past is not utterly past,

Though the word on its lips be the last,

And the time be gone by with its creed

When men were as beasts that bleed, As sheep or as swine that wallow,

In the shambles of faith and of fear.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo, Destroyer and healer, hear!

Yet it may be, lord and father, could we know it,

We that love thee for our darkness shall have light

More than ever prophet hailed of old, or poet

Standing crowned and robed and sovereign in thy sight.

To the likeness of one God their dreams enthralled thee.

Who wast greater than all gods that waned and grew;

Son of God the shining son of Time they called thee,

Who wast older, O our father, than they knew.

For no thought of man made gods to love or honor

Ere the song within the silent soul began;

Nor might earth in dream or deed take heaven upon her

Till the word was clothed with speech by lips of man.

And the word and the life wast thou,
The spirit of man and the breath;
And before thee the gods that bow

Take life at thine hands and death.

For these are as ghosts that wanc,
That are gone in an age or twain;
Harsh, merciful, passionate, pure,
They perish, but thou shalt endure;
Be their life as the swan's or the

swallow, They pass as the flight of a year. O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo, Destroyer and healer, hear!

Thou the word, the light, the life, the breath, the glory,

Strong to help and heal, to lighten and to slay,

Thine is all the song of man, the world's whole story;

Not of morning and of evening is thy

Old and younger gods are buried or begotten

From uprising to downsetting of thy sun,

Risen from eastward, fallen to westward and forgotten,

And their springs are many, but their end is one.

Divers births of godheads find one death appointed,

As the soul whence each was born makes room for each;

God by god goes out, discrowned and disanointed,

But the soul stands fast that gave them shape and speech.

Is the sun yet cast out of heaven?

Is the song yet cast out of man?

Life that had song for its leaven

To quicken the blood that ran
Through the veins of the songless

years
More bitter and cold than tears;

Heaven that had thee for its one Light, life, word, witness, O sun, —

Are they soundless and sightless and hollow,
Without eye, without speech, with-

Without eye, without speech, with out ear?

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo, Destroyer and healer, hear!

Time arose, and smote thee silent at his warning;

Change and darkness fell on men that fell from thee;

Dark thou satest, veiled with light, behind the morning,

Till the soul of man should lift up eves and see.

Till the blind mute soul get speech again and eyesight,

Man may worship not the light of life within:

In his sight the stars whose fires grow dark in thy sight

Shine as sunbeams on the night of death and sin.

Time again is risen with mightier word of warning,

Change hath blown again a blast of louder breath;

Clothed with clouds and stars and dreams that melt in morning,

Lo, the gods that ruled by grace of sin and death!

They are conquered, they break, they are stricken,

Whose might made the whole world pale:

They are dust that shall rise not or quicken

Though the world for their death's sake wail.

As a hound on a wild beast's trace, So time has their godhead in chase; As wolves when the hunt makes

head. They are scattered, they fly, they are

They are fled beyond hail, beyond

hollo, And the cry of the chase, and the

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo, Destroyer and healer, hear!

Day by day thy shadow shines in heaven beholden,

Even the sun, the shining shadow of thy face:

King, the ways of heaven before thy feet grow golden;

God, the soul of earth is kindled with thy grace.

In thy lips the speech of man whence gods were fashioned.

In thy soul the thought that makes them and unmakes;

By thy light and heat incarnate and impassioned,

Soul to soul of man gives light for light, and takes.

As they knew thy name of old time To find the place of souls that I decould we know it,

Healer called of sickness, slaver in voked of wrong,

Light of eyes that saw thy light, god, king, priest, poet,

Song should bring thee back to heal us with thy song.

For thy kingdom is past not away, Nor thy power from the place there-

of hurled: Out of heaven they shall cast not the

They shall cast not out song from

the world. By the song and the light they give,

We know thy works that they live; With the gift thou hast given us of speech

We praise, we adore, we beseech, We arise at thy bidding, and follow, We cry to thee, answer, appear,

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo, Destroyer and healer, hear!

## IN THE BAY.

BEYOND the hollow sunset, ere a star Take heart in heaven from eastward, while the west.

Fulfilled of watery resonance and rest. Is as a port with clouds for harbor-

To fold the fleet in of the winds from

That stir no plume now of the bland sea's breast:

### II.

Above the soft sweep of the breathless

South-westward, far past flight of night and day,

Lower than the sunken sunset sinks, and higher

Than dawn can freak the front of heaven with fire, -

My thought with eyes and wings made wide makes way

III.

If any place for any soul there be, Disrobed and disentrammelled; if the might,

The fire and force that filled with ardent light

The souls whose shadow is half the

light we see,

hid from me.

Survive, and be suppressed not of the night,—

This hour should show what all day

ıv.

Night knows not, neither is it shown to day,

By sunlight nor by starlight is it shown, Nor to the full moon's eye nor footfall known,

Their world's untrodden and unkindled

Nor is the breath nor music of it blown With sounds of winter or with winds of May.

v.

But here, where light and darkness reconciled

Hold earth between them as a weanling

Between the balanced hands of death and birth,

Even as they held the new-born shape of earth

When first life trembled in her limbs and smiled, —

Here hope might think to find what hope were worth.

VI.

Past Hades, past Elysium, past the long, Slow, smooth, strong lapse of Lethe; past the toil

Wherein all souls are taken as a spoil, The Stygian web of waters,—if your song

Be quenched not, O our brethren, but be strong

As ere ye too shook off our temporal coil;

VII.

It yet these twain survive your worldly breath.

Joy trampling sorrow, life devouring death,

If perfect life possess your life all through,

And like your words your souls be deathless too,

To-night; of all whom night encompass-

My soul would commune with one soul of you.

VIII.

Above the sunset, might I see thine eyes

That were above the sun-dawn in our skies,

Son of the songs of morning, — thine that were

First lights to lighten that rekindling air

Wherethrough men saw the front of England rise,

And heard thine loudest of the lyrenotes there, —

1X.

If yet thy fire have not one spark the less,

O Titan, born of her a Titaness,

Across the sunrise and the sunset's mark

Send of thy lyre one sound, thy fire one spark,

To change this face of our unworthiness,

Across this hour dividing light from dark;

х.

To change this face of our chill time, that hears

No song like thine of all that crowd its ears,

Of all its lights that lighten all day long Sees none like thy most fleet and fiery sphere's

Out-lightening Sirius, — in its twilight throng,

No thunder and no sunrise like thy song.

## XI.

Hath not the sea-wind swept the sealine bare

To pave with stainless fire, through stainless air,

A passage for thine heavenlier feet to tread

Ungrieved of earthly floor-work? hath it spread

No covering splendid as the sun-god's hair

To veil or to reveal thy lordlier head?

## XII.

Hath not the sunset strewn across the

A way majestical enough for thee?
What hour save this should be thine hour — and mine.

If thou have care of any less divine
Than thine own soul; if thou take
thought of me,

Marlowe, as all my soul takes thought of thine?

## XIII.

Before the moon's face as before the sun,

The morning star and evening star are one

For all men's lands as England. Oh, if night

Hang hard upon us, — ere our day take flight,
Shed thou some comfort from thy day

long done
On us pale children of the latter light!

## XIV.

For surely, brother and master, and lord and king,

Where'er thy footfall and thy face make spring

In all souls' eyes that meet thee wheresoe'er,

And have thy soul for sunshine and sweet air,—

Some late love of thine old live land should cling,

Some living love of England, round thee there.

## XV.

Here from her shore, across her sunniest sea,

My soul makes question of the sun for thee,

And waves and beams make answer. When thy feet

Made her ways flowerier and their flowers more sweet

With childlike passage of a god to be, Like spray these waves cast off her foemen's fleet.

## XVI.

Like foam they flung it from her, and like weed

Its wrecks were washed from scornful shoal to shoal,

From rock to rock reverberate; and the whole

Sea laughed and lightened with a deathless deed

That sowed our enemies in her field for seed,

And made her shores fit harborage for thy soul.

### XVII.

Then in her green south fields, a poor man's child,

Thou hadst thy short sweet fill of halfblown joy,

That ripens all of us for time to cloy With full-blown pain and passion, ere

the wild
World caught thee by the fiery heart,
and smiled

To make so swift end of the godlike boy.

#### XVIII.

For thou, if ever godlike foot there trod These fields of ours, wert surely like a god.

Who knows what splendor of strange dreams was shed

With sacred shadow and glimmer of gold and red

From hallowed windows, over stone and sod,

On thine unbowed, bright, insubmissive head?

## XIX.

The shadow stayed not, but the splendor stays,

Our brother, till the last of English days. No day nor night on English earth shall be

Forever, spring nor summer, Junes nor Mays,

But somewhat as a sound or gleam of

Shall come on us like morning from the

## XX.

Like sunrise never wholly risen, nor yet Quenched; or like sunset never wholly set.

A light to lighten as from living eyes The cold, unlit, close lids of one that lies Dead, or a ray returned from death's far skips

To fire us living lest our lives forget.

## XXI.

For in that heaven what light of lights may be,

What splendor of what stars, what spheres of flame

Sounding, that none may number nor may name,

We know not, even thy brethren; yea, not we

Whose eyes desire the light that lightened thee,

Whose ways and thine are one way and the same.

#### XXII.

But if the riddles that in sleep we read, And trust them not, be flattering truth indeed.

As he that rose our mightiest called them, — he,

Much higher than thou as thou much higher than we, —

There, might we say, all flower of all our seed,

All singing souls are as one sounding sea.

## XXIII.

All those that here were of thy kind and kin,

Beside thee and below thee, full of love, Full-souled for song, — and one alone above

Whose only light folds all your glories in —

With all birds' notes from nightingale to dove

Fill the world whither we too fain would win:

## XXIV.

The world that sees in heaven the sovereign light

Of sunlike Shakespeare, and the fiery

Whose stars were watched of Webster; and beneath,

The twin-souled brethren of the single wreath,

Grown in king's gardens, plucked from pastoral heath,

Wrought with all flowers for all men's heart's delight.

## XXV.

And that fixed fervor, iron-red like Mars,

In the mid moving tide of tenderer stars, That burned on loves and deeds the darkest done,

Athwart the incestuous prisoner's bridehouse bars:

And thine, most highest of all their fires but one,

Our morning star, sole risen before the sun.

## XXVI.

And one light risen since theirs to run such race

Thou hast seen, O Phosphor, from thy pride of place.

Thou hast seen Shelley, him that was to thee

As light to fire or dawn to lightning; me, -

Me likewise, O our brother, shalt thou

And I behold thee, face to glorious face?

## XXVII.

You twain the same swift year of man hood swept

Down the steep darkness, and our father

wept.

And from the gleam of Apollonian tears A holier aureole rounds your memories, kept

Most fervent-fresh of all the singing spheres,

And April-colored through all months and years.

### XXVIII.

You twain, fate spared not half your fiery span;

The longer date fulfils the lesser man. Ye from beyond the dark dividing date Stand smiling, crowned as gods, with foot on fate.

For stronger was your blessing than his

ban

And earliest whom he struck, he struck too late.

#### XXIX.

Yet love and loathing, faith and unfaith

Bind less to greater souls in unison,

And one desire that makes three spirits as one

Takes great and small as in one spiritual net

Woven out of hope toward what shall yet be done

Ere hate or love remember or forget;

## XXX.

Woven out of faith and hope and love too great

To bear the bonds of life and death and fate;

Woven out of love and hope and faith

too dear
To take the print of doubt and change

and fear; And interwoven with lines of wrath and

Blood-red with soils of many a sanguine year.

## XXXI.

Who cannot hate, can love not: if he grieve,

His tears are barren as the unfruitful

That rears no harvest from the green sea's plain,

And as thorns crackling this man's laugh is vain.

Nor can belief touch, kindle, smite, reprieve

His heart who has not heart to disbelieve.

## XXXII.

But you, most perfect in your hate and love,

Our great twin-spirited brethren; you that stand

Head by head glittering, hand made fast in hand,

And underfoot the fang-drawn worm

To wound you living; from so far above, Look love, not scorn, on ours that was your land.

## JIIXXX

For love we lack, and help and heat and light

To clothe us and to comfort us with might.

What help is ours to take or give? but

Oh, more than sunrise to the blind cold sea,

That wailed aloud with all her waves all night,

Much more being much more glorious

Much more, being much more glorious, should you be.

#### XXXIV.

As fire to frost, as ease to toil, as dew To flowerless fields, as sleep to slackening pain,

As hope to souls long weaned from hope again

Returning, or as blood revived anew

To dry-drawn limbs and every pulseless vein, —

Even so toward us should no man be but you.

## XXXV.

One rose before the sunrise was, and one Before the sunset, lovelier than the sun. And now the heaven is dark and bright and loud

With wind and starry drift and moon and cloud,

And night's cry rings in straining sheet and shroud:

What help is ours if hope like yours be none?

### XXXVI.

O well-beloved, our brethren, if ye be, Then are we not forsaken. This kind earth

Made fragrant once for all time with your birth,

And bright for all men with your love, and worth

The class and kiss and wedlock of the

Were not your mother if not your brethren we.

## XXXVII.

Because the days were dark with gods and kings,

And in time's hand the old hours of time as rods,

When force and fear set hope and faith at odds,

Ye failed not, nor abased your plumeplucked wings;

And we that front not more disastrous things,

How should we fail in face of kings and gods?

## XXXVIII.

For now the deep dense plumes of night are thinned

Surely with winnowing of the glimmering wind

Whose feet are fledged with morning; and the breath

Begins in heaven that sings the dark to death.

And all the night wherein men groaned and sinned

Sickens at heart to hear what sundawn saith.

## XXXIX.

O first-born sons of hope and fairest! ye Whose prows first clove the thought unsounded sea

Whence all the dark dead centuries rose to bar

The spirit of man lest truth should make him free.

The sunrise and the sunset, seeing one star,

Take heart as we to know you that ye are.

## XL.

Ye rise not, and ye set not: we that say Ye rise and set like hopes that set and rise

Look yet but seaward from a land-locked bay;

But where at last the sea's line is the sky's,

And truth and hope one sunlight in your eyes,

No sunrise and no sunset marks their day.

## A FORSAKEN GARDEN.

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,

At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee.

Walled round with rocks as an inland island,

The ghost of a garden fronts the sea. A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses

The steep square slope of the blossomless bed

Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its roses

Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,

To the low last edge of the long lone land.

If a step should sound or a word be spoken,

Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?

So long have the gray bare walks lain guestless,

Through branches and briers if a man make way,

He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless

Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled

That crawls by a track none turn to climb

To the strait waste place that the years have rifled

Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.

The thorns he spares when the rose is taken:

The rocks are left when he wastes the plain;

The wind that wanders, the weeds windshaken,

These remain.

Not a flower to be prest of the foot that falls not;

As the heart of a dead man the seedplots are dry;

From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls not,

Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.

Over the meadows that blossom and wither,

Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song.

Only the sun and the rain come hither All year long.

The sun burns sear, and the rain dishevels

One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels

In a round where life seems barren as death.

Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,

Haply, of lovers none ever will know,

Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look thither,"

Did he whisper? "Look forth from the flowers to the sea;

For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms wither,

And men that love lightly may die — But we?"

And the same wind sang, and the same waves whitened,

And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,

In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and

then went whither?
And were one to the end — but what end who knows?

Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,

As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.

Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?

What love was ever as deep as a grave? They are loveless now as the grass above them

Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers, Not known of the cliffs and the fields

and the sea.

Not a breath of the time that has been

hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to

Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter

Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,

When as they that are free now of weep-

ing and laughter We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever; Here change may come not till all change end.

From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,

Who have left naught living to rav age and rend.

Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,

While the sun and the rain live, these

shall be;

Till a last wind's breath, upon all these blowing,

Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise, and the sheer cliff crumble,

Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,

Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble

The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink.

Here now in his triumph where all \*hings falter,

Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,

As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,

Death lies dead.

## RELICS.

This flower that smells of honey and the sea,

White laurustine, seems in my hand to

A white star made of memory long Lit in the heaven of dear times dead to

A star out of the skies, love used to

Here held in hand, a stray left yet to

What flowers my heart was full of in the days

That are long since gone down dead memory's flow.

Dead memory that revives on doubtful ways,

Half hearkening what the buried sea son says.

Out of the world of the unapparent

Where the lost Aprils are, and the lost Mays.

Flower, once I knew thy star-white brethren bred

Nigh where the last of all the land made head

Against the sea, a keen-faced prom ontory, -

Flowers on salt wind and sprinkled sea dews fed.

Their hearts were glad of the free place's glory;

The wind that sang them all his stormy story

Had talked all winter to the sleepless spray,

And as the sea's their hues were hard and hoary.

Like things born of the sea and the bright day,

They laughed out at the years that could not slay,

Live sons and joyous of unquiet hours.

And stronger than all storms that range for prey.

And in the close indomitable flowers

A keen-edged odor of the sun and showers

Was as the smell of the fresh honey-

Made sweet for mouths of none but paramours.

Out of the hard green wall of leaves that clomb,

They showed like windfalls of the snow soft foam,

Or feathers from the weary southwind's wing,

Fair as the spray that it came shoreward from.

And thou, as white, what word hast thou to bring?

If my heart hearken, whereof wilt thou sing?

For some sign surely thou, too, hast to bear

Some word far south was taught thee of the spring.

White like a white rose, not like these that were

raught of the wind's mouth and the winter air,

Poor tender thing of soft Italian bloom,

Where once thou grewest, what else for me grew there?

Born in what spring and on what city's tomb.

By whose hand wast thou reached, and plucked for whom?

There hangs about thee, could the soul's sense tell,

An odor as of love and of love's doom.

Of days more sweet than thou wast sweet to smell,

Of flower-soft thoughts that came to flower and fell,

Of loves that lived a lily's life and died,

Of dreams now dwelling where dead roses dwell.

O white birth of the golden mountainside

That for the sun's love makes its bosom wide

At sunrise, and with all its woods and flowers

Takes in the morning to its heart of pride!

Thou hast a word of that one land of ours,

And of the fair town called of the fair towers,

A word for me of my San Gimignan,

A word of April's greenest-girdled hours;

Of the breached walls whereon the wallflowers ran

Called of Saint Fina, breachless now of

Though time with soft feet break them stone by stone,

Who breaks down hour by hour his own reign's span;

Of the cliff overcome and overgrown That all that flowerage clothed as flesh clothes bone,

That garment of acacias made for May,

Whereof here lies one witness over-

The fair brave trees with all their flowers at play,

How king-like they stood up into the day!

How sweet the day was with them, and the night!

Such words of message have dead flowers to say.

This that the winter and the wind made bright,

And this that lived upon Italian light, Before I throw them and these words away,

Who knows but I what memories too take flight?

## SESTIMA.

I saw my soul at rest upon a day

As a bird sleeping in the nest of night,

Among soft leaves that give the starlight way

To touch its wings but not its eyes with light;

So that it knew as one in visions may, And knew not as men waking, of delight.

This was the measure of my soul's delight;

It had no power of joy to fly by day, Nor part in the large lordship of the light;

But in a secret, moon-beholden way

Had all its will of dreams and pleasant night,

And all the love and light that sleep ers may.

But such life's triumph as men waking may

It might not have to feed its faint delight

Between the stars by night and sun by day,

Shut up with green leaves and a little light;

Because its way was as a lost star's

A world's not wholly known of day or night.

All loves and dreams and sounds and gleams of night

Made it all music that such minstrels may.

And all they had they gave it of delight;

But in the full face of the fire of day

What place shall be for any starry light,

What part of heaven in all the wide sun's way?

Yet the soul woke not, sleeping by the way,

Watched as a nursling of the largeeyed night,

And sought no strength nor knowledge of the day,

Nor closer touch conclusive of delight,

Nor mightier joy nor truer than dreamers may,

Nor more of song than they, nor more of light.

For who sleeps once, and sees the secret light

Whereby sleep shows the soul a fairer way

Between the rise and rest of day and night,

Shall care no more to fare as all men may,

But he his place of pain or of delight,
There shall he dwell, beholding night
as day.

Song, have thy day, and take thy fill of light

Before the night be fallen across thy way:

Sing while he may, man hath no long delight.

## A WASTED VIGIL.

I.

COULDST thou not watch with me one hour? Behold,

Dawn skims the sea with flying feet of gold,

With sudden feet that graze the gradual sea:

Couldst thou not watch with me?

11.

What, not one hour? For star by star the night

Falls, and her thousands world by world take flight;

They die, and day survives, and what of thee?

Couldst thou not watch with me?

III.

Lo, far in heaven the web of night undone,

And on the sudden sea the gradual sun; Wave to wave answers, tree responds to tree:

Couldst thou not watch with me?

IV.

Sunbeam by sunbeam creeps from line to line,

Foam by foam quickens on the brightening brine;

Sail by sail passes, flower by flower gets

Couldst thou not watch with me?

V.

Last year, a brief while since, an age ago,

A whole year past, with bud and bloom and snow,

O moon that wast in heaven, what friends were we!

Couldst thou not watch with me?

### VI.

Old moons, and last year's flowers, and last year's snows,

Who now saith to thee, moon? or who saith, rose?

O dust and ashes, once found fair to see! Couldst thou not watch with me?

### VII.

O dust and ashes, once thought sweet to smell!

With me it is not, is it with thee, well? O sea-drift blown from windward back to lee!

Couldst thou not watch with me?

### VIII.

The old year's dead hands are full of their dead flowers,

The old days are full of dead old loves of ours,

Born as a rose, and briefer born than

Couldst thou not watch with me?

## IX.

Could two days live again of that dead vear, One would say, seeking us and passing

here, Where is she? and one answering,

Where is he?

Couldst thou not watch with me?

Nay, those two lovers are not anywhere; If we were they, none knows us what we were,

Nor aught of all their barren grief and glee:

Couldst thou not watch with me?

#### XI.

Half false, half fair, all feeble, be my

Upon thee not for blessing nor for And all night on my sleepless maiden curse,

For some must stand, and some must fall or flee:

Couldst thou not watch with me?

### XII.

As a new moon above spent stars thou wast;

But stars endure after the moon is past, Couldst thou not watch one hour, though I watch three?

Couldst thou not watch with me?

### XIII.

What of the night? The night is full. the tide

Storms inland, the most ancient rocks divide; Yet some endure, and bow nor head

nor knee:

Couldst thou not watch with me?

### XIV.

Since thou art not as these are, go thy

Thou hast no part in all my nights and days.

Lie still, sleep on, be glad -as such things be:

Thou couldst not watch with me.

## THE COMPLAINT OF LISA.

(Double Sestina.)

## DECAMERON, x. 7.

THERE is no woman living that draws breath

So sad as I, though all things sadden

There is not one upon life's weariest way

Who is weary as I am weary of all but death.

Toward whom I look as looks the sunflower

All day with all his whole soul toward the sun;

While in the sun's sight I make moan all day,

bed

Weep and call out on death, O Love, and thee,

That thou or he would take me to the dead,

And know not what thing evil I have

That life should lay such heavy hand on me.

Alas! Love, what is this thou wouldst

What honor shalt thou have to quench my breath,

Or what shall my heart broken profit thee?

O Love, O great god Love, what have I done,

That thou shouldst hunger so after my death?

My heart is harmless as my life's first day:

Seek out some false fair woman, and plague her

Till her tears even as my tears fill her bed:

I am the least flower in thy flowery way,

But till my time be come that I be dead, Let me live out my flower-time in the sun,

Though my leaves shut before the sun flower.

O Love, Love, the kingly sunflower!

Shall he the sun hath looked on look on me.

That live down here in shade, out of the sun,

Here living in the sorrow and shadow of death?

Shall he that feeds his heart full of the

Care to give mine eyes light, or my lips breath?

Because she loves him, shall my lord love her

Who is as a worm in my lord's kingly way?

I shall not see him or know him alive or dead;

But thou, I know thee, O Love, and pray to thee

That in brief while my brief life-days be done,

And the worm quickly make my marriage-bed.

For underground there is no sleepless bed:

But here since I beheld my sunflower These eyes have slept not, seeing all night and day

His sunlike eyes, and face fronting the sun.

Wherefore, if anywhere be any death, I would fain find and fold him fast to

That I may sleep with the world's eldest dead,

With her that died seven centuries since, and her

That went last night down the nightwandering way.

For this is sleep indeed, when labor is done,

Without love, without dreams, and without breath,

And without thought, O name unnamed! of thee.

Ah! but, forgetting all things, shall I thee?

Wilt thou not be as now about my bed There underground as here before the sun?

Shall not thy vision vex me alive and dead,

Thy moving vision without form or breath?

I read long since the bitter tale of her Who read the tale of Launcelot on a

And died, and had no quiet after death, But was moved ever along a weary way, Lost with her love in the underworld; ah me.

O my king, O my lordly sunflower,

Would God to me, too, such a thing were done!

But if such sweet and bitter things be done,

Then, flying from life, I shall not fly from thee.

For in that living world without a sun

Thy vision will lay hold upon me dead,

And meet and mock me, and mar my peace in death.

Yet if being wroth, God had such pity on her,

Who was a sinner and foolish in her day,

That even in hell they twain should breathe one breath,

Why should he not in some wise pity me?

So if I sleep not in my soft strait bed, I may look up and see my sunflower As he the sun, in some divine strange

way.

O poor my heart, well knowest thou in what way

This sore sweet evil unto us was done. For on a holy and a heavy day

I was arisen out of my still small bed To see the knights tilt, and one said to

"The king;" and seeing him, somewhat stopped my breath;

And if the girl spake more, I heard not

her,
For only I saw what I shall see when dead,

A kingly flower of knights, a sunflower, That shone against the sunlight like the sun,

And like a fire, O heart, consuming

The fire of love that lights the pyre of death.

Howbeit I shall not die an evil death Who have loved in such a sad and sinless way,

That this my love, lord, was no shame to thee.

So when mine eyes are shut against the sun,

O my soul's sun, O the world's sunflower,

Thou nor no man will quite despise me dead.

And dying I pray with all my low last breath

That thy whole life may be as was that day,

That feast-day that made trothplight death and me,
Giving the world light of thy great

deeds done; And that fair face brightening thy bri-

And that fair face brightening thy bridal bed,

That God be good as God hath been to her.

That all things goodly and glad remain with her,

All things that make glad life and goodly death;

That as a bee sucks from a sunflower Honey, when summer draws delighted breath,

Her soul may drink of thy soul in like way,

And love make life a fruitful marriage-

Where day may bring forth fruits of joy to day

And night to night till days and nights be dead.

And as she gives light of her love to thee,

Give thou to her the old glory of days

long done;
And either give some heat of light to me,

To warm me where I sleep without the sun.

O sunflower made drunken with the sun, O knight whose lady's heart draws thine to her,

Great king, glad lover, I have a word to thee.

There is a weed lives out of the sun's way,

Hid from the heat deep in the meadow's bed,

That swoons and whitens at the wind's least breath,

A flower star-shaped, that all a summer day

Will gaze her soul out on the sunflower For very love till twilight finds her dead. But the great sunflower heeds not her poor death,

Knows not when all her loving life is done:

And so much knows my lord the king of me.

Ay, all day long he has no eye for

With golden eye following the golden For love of her that gave thee wings

From rose-colored to purple-pillowed

From birthplace to the flame-lit place of death.

From eastern end to western of his

So mine eye follows thee, my sunflower, So the white star-flower turns and yearns to thee,

The sick weak weed, not well alive or dead,

Trod under foot if any pass by her,

Pale, without color of summer or summer breath

In the shrunk shuddering petals, that have done

No work but love, and die before the

But thou, to-day, to-morrow, and every day,

Be glad and great, O love whose love slavs me.

Thy fervent flower made fruitful from the sun

Shall drop its golden seed in the world's

That all men thereof nourished shall praise thee

For grain and flower and fruit of works well done:

Till thy shed seed, O shining sunflower, Bring forth such growth of the world's garden-bed

As like the sun shall outlive age and

And yet I would thine heart had heed of her

Who loves thee alive; but not till she be dead.

Come, Love, then, quickly, and take her utmost breath.

Song, speak for me who am dumb as are the dead:

From my sad bed of tears I send forth

To fly all day from sun's birth to sun's A staff for man's free thought to walk death

Down the sun's way after the flying

and breath

Ere day be done, to seek the sunflower.

## FOR THE FEAST OF GIORDANO BRUNO,

## PHILOSOPHER AND MARTYR.

Son of the lightning and the light that glows

Beyond the lightning's or the morning's light,

Soul splendid with all-righteous love

of right, In whose keen fire all hopes and fears

and woes Were clean consumed, and from their ashes rose

Transfigured, and intolerable to

Save of purged eyes whose lids had cast off night,

In love's and wisdom's likeness when they close,

Embracing, and between them truth stands fast,

Embraced of either; thou whose feet were set

On English earth while this was England vet.

Our friend that art, our Sidney's frience that wast,

Heart hardier found and higher than all men's past,

Shall we not praise thee though thine own forget?

H.

Lift up thy light on us and on thine own,

O soul whose spirit on earth was as

To scourge off priests, a sword to pierce their God,

alone.

A lamp to lead him far from shrine and throne

On ways untrodden where his fathers trod Ere earth's heart withered at a high

priest's nod,

And all men's mouths that made not prayer made moan.

From bonds and torments and the ravening flame,

Surely thy spirit of sense rose up to

Lucretius, where such only spirits meet, And walk with him apart till Shelley

To make the heaven of heavens more heavenly sweet,

And mix with yours a third incorporate name.

## AVE ATQUE VALE.

IN MEMORY OF CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.

Nous devions pourtant lui porter quelques fleurs:

Les morts, les pauvres morts, ont de grandes douleurs,

Et quand Octobre souffle, émondeur des vieux arbres, Son vent mélancolique à l'entour de leurs

marbres,

Certe, ils doivent trouver les vivants bien ingrats.

Les Fleurs du Mal.

SHALL I strew on thee rose or rue or laurel,

Brother, on this that was the veil of

Or quiet sea-flower moulded by the

Or simplest growth of meadow-sweet or sorrel.

Such as the summer-sleepy dryads

Waked up by snow-soft sudden rains at eve?

Or wilt thou rather, as on earth before. Half-faded fiery blossoms, pale with

And full of bitter summer, but more

To thee than gleanings of a northern shore

Trod by no tropic feet?

II.

For always thee the fervid languid glories

Allured of heavier suns in mightier skies: Thine ears knew all the wandering

watery sighs

Where the sea sobs round Lesbian promontories,

The barren kiss of piteous wave to

That knows not where is that Leu-

cadian grave Which hides too deep the supreme head of song.

Ah! salt and sterile as her kisses were, The wild sea winds her and the green gulfs bear

Hither and thither, and vex and work her wrong,

Blind gods that cannot spare.

## III.

Thou sawest, in thine old singing season, brother,

Secrets and sorrows unbeheld of us: Fierce loves, and lovely leaf-buds poisonous,

Bare to thy subtler eye, but for none

Blowing by night in some unbreathed in clime:

The hidden harvest of luxurious time, Sin without shape, and pleasure without speech;

And where strange dreams in a tumultuous sleep

Make the shut eyes of stricken spirits

And with each face thou sawest the shadow on each,

Seeing as men sow men reap.

IV.

O sleepless heart and sombre soul unsleeping.

That were athirst for sleep and no more life

And no more love, for peace and no more strife!

Now the dim gods of death have in their keeping

Spirit and body and all the springs of song,

Is it well now where love can do no wrong,

Where stingless pleasure has no foam or fang

Behind the unopening closure of her

Is it not well where soul from body

And flesh from bone divides without a

As dew from flower-bell drips?

It is enough: the end and the beginning Are one thing to thee, who art past the end.

O hand unclasped of unbeholden friend!

For thee no fruits to pluck, no palms for winning,

No triumph and no labor and no lust, Only dead yew-leaves and a little

dust. O quiet eyes wherein the light saith

naught, Whereto the day is dumb, nor any

With obscure finger silences your sight,

Nor in your speech the sudden soul speaks thought,

Sleep, and have sleep for light.

Now all strange hours and all strange loves are over.

Dreams and desires and sombre songs and sweet,

Hast thou found place at the great knees and feet

Of some pale Titan-woman like a lover,

Such as thy vision here solicited,

Under the shadow of her fair vast head.

The deep division of prodigious breasts, The solemn slope of mighty limbs asleep,

The weight of awful tresses that still

The savor and shade of old-world pineforests

Where the wet hill-winds weep?

Hast thou found any likeness for thy vision?

O gardener of strange flowers, what bud, what bloom,

Hast thou found sown, what gathered in the gloom?

What of despair, of rapture, of derision,

What of life is there, what of ill or good?

Are the fruits gray like dust, or bright like blood?

Does the dim ground grow any seed of

The faint fields quicken any terrene root.

In low lands where the sun and moon are mute.

And all the stars keep silence? Are there flowers

At all, or any fruit?

### VIII.

Alas! but though my flying song flies after.

O sweet strange elder singer, thy more fleet

Singing, and footprints of thy fleeter

Some dim derision of mysterious laugh-

From the blind tongueless warders of the dead,

Some gainless glimpse of Proserpine's veiled head,

Some little sound of unregarded tears Wept by effaced unprofitable eyes,

And from pale mouths some cadence of dead sighs, -

These, only these, the hearkening spirit hears,

Sees only such things rise.

Thou art far too far for wings of words to follow.

Far too far off for thought or any

What ails us with thee, who art wind and air?

What ails us gazing where all seen is hollow?

Yet with some fancy, yet with some

Dreams pursue death as winds a flying fire,

Our dreams pursue our dead, and do not find.

Still, and more swift than they, the thin flame flies.

The low light fails us in elusive skies. Still the foiled earnest ear is deaf, and blind

Are still the eluded eyes.

Not thee, oh! never thee, in all time's changes,

Not thee, but this the sound of thy sad soul.

The shadow of thy swift spirit, this shut scroll

I lay my hand on, and not death estranges

My spirit from communion of thy song;

These memories and these melodies that throng

Veiled porches of a Muse funereal, — These I salute, these touch, these clasp and fold

As though a hand were in my hand to hold,

Or through mine ears a mourning musi-

Of many mourners rolled.

### XI.

I among these, I also, in such station As when the pyre was charred, and piled the sods.

And offering to the dead made, and their gods.

The old mourners had, standing to make libation.

I stand, and to the gods and to the

Do reverence without prayer or praise, and shed

Offering to these unknown, the gods of gloom, And what of honey and spice my

seed-lands bear,

And what I may of fruits in this chilled air,

And lay, Orestes-like, across the tomb A curl of severed hair.

## XII.

But by no hand nor any treason stricken, Not like the low-lying head of Him, the king,

The flame that made of Troy a ruinous thing,

Thou liest, and on this dust no tears could quicken

There fall no tears like theirs that all men hear

Fall tear by sweet imperishable tear Down the opening leaves of holy poets' pages.

Thee not Orestes, not Electra. mourns;

But bending us-ward with memorial

The most high Muses that fulfil all ages Weep, and our God's heart yearns.

For, sparing of his sacred strength, not

Among us darkling here the lord of light

Makes manifest his music and his might

In hearts that open and in lips that soften

With the soft flame and heat of songs that shine.

Thy lips indeed he touched with bittet wine,

And nourished them indeed with bitter bread:

Yet surely from his hand thy soul's food came,

The fire that scarred thy spirit at his

Was lighted, and thine hungering heart he fed

Who feeds our hearts with fame.

Therefore he too now at thy soul's sunsetting,

God of all suns and songs, he too bends down

To mix his laurel with thy cypress

And save thy dust from blame and from forgetting.

Therefore he too, seeing all thou wert

and art. Compassionate, with sad and sacred heart.

Mourns thee of many his children the

last dead. And hallows with strange tears and

alien sighs Thine unmelodious mouth and sunless eves.

And over thine irrevocable head Sheds light from the under skies.

And one weeps with him in the ways Lethean, And stains with tears her changing

bosom chill:

That obscure Venus of the hollow

That thing transformed which was the Cytherean,

With lips that lost their Grecian laugh divine

Long since, and face no more called

Erycine 4 ghost, a bitter and luxurious god.

Thee also with fair flesh and singing spell Did she, a sad and second prey, com-

Into the footless places once more trod, And shadows hot from hell.

## XVI.

And now no sacred staff shall break in blossom.

No choral salutation lure to light

A spirit sick with perfume and sweet

And love's tired eyes and hands and barren bosom.

There is no help for these things; none to mend,

And none to mar; not all our songs, O friend!

Will make death clear, or make life durable.

Howbeit with rose and ivy and wild

And with wild notes about this dust

of thine At least I fill the place where white dreams dwell,

And wreathe an unseen shrine.

## XVII.

Sleep; and if life was bitter to thee, pardon,

If sweet, give thanks; thou hast no more to live; And to give thanks is good, and to

forgive. Out of the mystic and the mournful

garden Where all day through thine hands

in barren braid Wove the sick flowers of secrecy

and shade. Green buds of sorrow and sin, and

remnants gray, Sweet-smelling, pale with poison, san-

guine-hearted, Passions that sprang from sleep and

thoughts that started, Shall death not bring us all as thee one

Among the days departed?

### XVIII.

For thee, oh, now a silent soul, my brother,

Take at my hands this garland, and farewell.

Thin is the leaf, and chill the wintry smell,

And chill the solemn earth, a fatal mother,

With sadder than the Niobean womb, And in the hollow of her breasts a tomb.

Content thee, howsoe'er, whose days are done:

There lies not any troublous thing before.

Nor sight nor sound to war against thee more,

For whom all winds are quiet as the sun, All waters as the shore.

## MEMORIAL VERSES

ON THE DEATH OF THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

DEATH, what hast thou to do with me?
So saith

Love, with eyes set against the face of Death:

What have I done, O thou strong Death, to thee,

That mine own lips should wither from thy breath?

Though thou be blind as fire or as the sea,

Why should thy waves and storms make war on me?

Is it for hate thou hast to find me fair, Or for desire to kiss, if it might be,—

My very mouth of song, and kill me there?

So with keen rains vexing his crownless hair.

With bright feet bruised from no delightful way,

Through darkness and the disenchanted air, —

Lost Love went weeping half a winter's day.

And the armed wind that smote him seemed to say,

How shall the dew live when the dawn is fled.

Or wherefore should the Mayflower outlast May?

Then Death took Love by the right hand, and said,

Smiling, Come now, and look upon thy dead.

But Love cast down the glories of his eyes.

And bowed down like a flower his flowerless head.

And Death spake, saying, What ails thee in such wise,

Being god, to shut thy sight up from the skies?

If thou canst see not, hast thou ears to hear?

Or is thy soul too as a leaf that dies?

Even as he spake with fleshless lips of fear,

But soft as sleep sings in a tired man's ear,

Behold, the winter was not, and its might

Fell, and fruits broke forth of the barren year.

And upon earth was largess of great light,

And moving music winged for world-wide flight,

And shapes and sounds of gods beheld and heard,

And day's foot set upon the neck of night.

And with such song the hollow ways were stirred
As of a god's heart hidden in a bird,

Or as the whole soul of the sun in spring

Should find full utterance in one flowersoft word,—

And all the season should break forth and sing

From one flower's lips, in one rose triumphing;

Such breath and light of song as of a flame

Made ears and spirits of them that heard it ring.

And Love beholding knew not for the

The shape that led him, nor in face nor name;

For he was bright, and great of thews. and fair,

And in Love's eyes he was not Death, but Fame.

Not that gray ghost whose life is empty and bare.

And his limbs moulded out of mortal air,

A cloud of change that shifts into a shower.

And dies, and leaves no light for time to wear:

But a god clothed with his own joy and power. A god re-risen out of his mortal

Immortal, king and lord of time and

With eyes that look on them as from a tower.

And where he stood the pale sepulchral place

Bloomed, as new life might in a blood less face.

And where men sorrowing came to seek a tomb

With funeral flowers and tears for grief and grace, -

They saw with light as of a world in bloom

The portal of the House of Fame illume

The ways of life wherein we toiling tread.

And watched the darkness as a brand consume.

And through the gates where rule the deathless dead

The sound of a new singer's soul was shed

That sang among his kinsfolk, and a

head;

A new star lightening the Lethean stream.

A new song mixed into the song supreme

Made of all souls of singers and their might,

That makes of life and time and death a dream:

Thy star, thy song, O soul that in our sight

Wast as a sun that made for man's delight

Flowers and all fruits in season, being so near

The sun-god's face, our god that gives us light.

To him, of all gods that we love or fear,

Thou among all men by thy name wast dear. —

Dear to the god that gives us spirit of song

To bind and burn all hearts of men that hear;

The god that makes men's words too sweet and strong

For life or time or death to do them wrong,

Who sealed with his thy spirit for a

And filled it with his breath thy whole life long;

Who made thy moist lips fiery with new wine

Pressed from the grapes of song the sovereign vine,

And with all love of all things loveli-

Gave thy soul power to make them more divine, -

That thou might'st breathe upon the breathless rest

Of marble, till the brows and lips and breast

Felt fall from off them as a cancelled

Shot from the star on a new ruler's That speechless sleep wherewith they lived opprest;

Who gave thee strength and heat of spirit to pierce

All clouds of form and color that disperse,

And leave the spirit of beauty to

In types of clean chryselephantine verse;

Who gave thee words more golden than fine gold

To carve in shapes more glorious than of old,

And build thy songs up in the sight of time

As statues set in godhead manifold, -

In sight and scorn of temporal change

That meet the sun re-risen with refluent

As god to god might answer face to face —

From lips whereon the morning strikes sublime.

Dear to the god, our god who gave thee

Among the chosen of days, the royal race,

The lords of light, whose eyes of old and ears

Saw even on earth and heard him for a space.

There are the souls of those once mortal years

That wrought with fire of joy and light of tears,

In words divine as deeds that grew thereof,

Such music as he swoons with love who hears.

There are the lives that lighten from above

Our under lives, the spheral souls that move

Through the ancient heaven of songillumined air,

Whence we that hear them singing die with love.

There all the crowned Hellenic heads, and there

The old gods who made men godlike as they were,

The lyric lips wherefrom all songs take fire,

Live eyes, and light of Apollonian hair.

There, round the sovereign passion of that lyre

Which the stars hear, and tremble with desire,

The ninefold light Pierian is made one That here we see divided, and aspire,—

Seeing, after this or that crown to be won:

But where they hear the singing of the sun,

All form, all sound, all color, and all thought

Are as one body and soul in unison.

There the song sung shines as a picture wrought,

The painted mouths sing that on earth say naught,

The carven limbs have sense of blood and growth,

And large-eyed life that seeks nor lacks not aught.

There all the music of thy living mouth Lives, and all loves wrought of thine hand in youth,

And bound about the breasts and brows with gold,

And colored pale or dusk from north or south.

Fair living things made to thy will of old, Born of thy lips, no births of mortal mould.

That in the world of song about thee wait

Where thought and truth are one and manifold.

Within the graven lintels of the gate
That here divides our vision and our fate,
The drawns we will in said the

The dreams we walk in and the truths of sleep,

All sense and spirit have life inseparate.

There, what one thinks, is his to grasp and keep;

There are no dreams, but very joys to reap;

No foiled desires that die before delight,

No fears to see across our joys, and weep.

There hast thou all thy will of thought and sight,

All hope for harvest, and all heaven for flight;

The sunrise of whose golden-mouthed glad head

To paler songless ghosts was heat and light.

Here, where the sunset of our year is red,

Men think of thee as of the summer

Gone forth before the snows, before thy day,

With unshod feet, with brows unchapleted.

Couldst thou not wait till age had wound, they say,

Round those wreathed brows his soft white blossoms? Nay,

Why shouldst thou vex thy soul with this harsh air,—

Thy bright-winged soul, once free to take its way?

Nor for men's reverence hadst thou need to wear

The holy flower of gray time-hallowed hair;

Nor were it fit that aught of thee grew old,

Fair lover all thy days of all things

And hear we not thy words of molten gold

Singing? or is their light and heat a-cold

a-cold
Whereat men warmed their spirits?
Nay, for all

These yet are with us, ours to hear and hold.

The lovely laughter, the clear tears, the

Of love to love on ways where shadows fall,

Through doors of dim division and disguise,

And music made of doubts unmusical

The love that caught strange light from death's own eyes,<sup>1</sup>

And filled death's lips with fiery words and sighs,

And half asleep let feed from veins of his

Her close red warm snake's mouth, Egyptian-wise:

And that great night of love more strange than this,<sup>2</sup>

When she that made the whole world's bale and bliss

Made king of the whole world's desire a slave,

And killed him in mid kingdom with a kiss;

Veiled loves that shifted shapes and shafts, and gave,<sup>3</sup>

Laughing, strange gifts to hands that durst not crave, Flowers doubled-blossomed, fruits of

scent and hue
Sweet as the bride-bed, stranger than

Sweet as the bride-bed, stranger that the grave;

All joys and wonders of old lives and new

That ever in love's shine or shadow grew,

And all the grief whereof he dreams and grieves,

And all sweet roots fed on his light and dew;

All these through thee our spirit of sense perceives,

As threads in the unseen woof thy music weaves,

<sup>1</sup> La Morte Amoureuse.

Une Nuit de Cléopâtre,
 Mademoiselle de Maupin.

Birds caught and snared that fill our ears with thee,

ay-blossoms in thy wreath of brow-

Mixed with the masque of death's old comedy

Chough thou too pass, have here our flowers, that we

For all the flowers thou gav'st upon thee shed,

and pass not crownless to Persephone.

Blue lotus-blooms and white and rosyred

We wind with poppies for thy silent head,

And on this margin of the sundering

Leave thy sweet light to rise upon the dead.

## AGE AND SONG.

(TO BARRY CORNWALL.)

Ť.

In vain men tell us time can alter Old loves, or make old memories falter; That with the old year the old year's life closes.

The old dew still falls on the old sweet

The old sun revives the new-fledged hours,

The old summer rears the new-born roses.

H.

Much more a Muse that bears upon her Raiment and wreath and flower of honor,

Gathered long since and long since woven.

Fades not or falls as fall the vernal Blossoms that bear no fruit eternal,

By summer or winter charred or cloven.

HI.

No time casts down, no time upraises, Such loves, such memories, and such praises,

As need no grace of sun or shower, No saving screen from frost or thunder. To tend and house around and under

The imperishable and fearless flower

IV.

Old thanks, old thoughts, old aspirations,

Outlive men's lives and lives of na-

Dead, but for one thing which survives—

The inalienable and unpriced treasure, The old joy of power, the old pride of pleasure,

That lives in light above men's lives.

## IN MEMORY OF BARRY CORN-WALL.

(OCT. 4, 1874.)

Τ.

In the garden of death, where the singers whose names are deathless

One with another make music unheard of men,

Where the dead sweet roses fade not of lips long breathless,

And the fair eyes shine that shall weep not or change again,

Who comes now crowned with the blossom of snow-white years?
What music is this that the world of

the dead men hears?

II.

Beloved of men, whose words on our lips were honey,

Whose name in our ears and our fathers' ears was sweet,

Like summer gone forth of the land his songs made sunny,

To the beautiful veiled bright world where the glad ghosts meet,

Child, father, bridegroom and bride, and anguish and rest,

No soul shall pass of a singer than this more blest.

111

Blest for the years' sweet sake that were filled and brightened,

As a forest with birds, with the fruit and the flower of his song;

For the souls' sake blest that heard, and their cares were lightened, For the hearts' sake blest that have

fostered his name so long; By the living and dead lips blest that

have loved his name,

And clothed with their praise and
crowned with their love for fame.

IV.

Ah, fair and fragrant his fame as flowers that close not,

That shrink not by day for heat or for cold by night,

As a thought in the heart shall increase when the heart's self knows not, Shall endure in our ears as a sound, in our eyes as a light;

Shall wax with the years that wane and the seasons' chime,

As a white rose thornless that grows in the garden of time.

v.

The same year calls, and one goes hence with another,

And men sit sad that were glad for their sweet songs' sake;

The same year beckons, and elder with younger brother

Takes mutely the cup from his hand that we all shall take.

They pass ere the leaves be past or the snows be come;

And the birds are loud, but the lips that outsang them dumb.

VI.

Time takes them home that we loved, fair names and famous,

To the soft long sleep, to the broad sweet bosom of death;

But the flower of their souls he shall take not away to shame us,

1 Sydney Dobell died Aug. 22, 1874.

Nor the lips lack song forever that now lack breath.

For with us shall the music and perfume that die not dwell,

Though the dead to our dead bid welcome, and we farewell.

## EPICEDE.

(James Lorimer Graham died at Florence, April 30, 1876.)

LIFE may give for love to death
Little: what are life's gifts worth
To the dead wrapt round with earth?
Yet from lips of living breath
Sighs or words we are fain to give,
All that yet, while yet we live,
Life may give for love to death.

Dead so long before his day,
Passed out of the Italian sun
To the dark where all is done
Fallen upon the verge of May;
Here at life's and April's end
How should song salute my friend
Dead so long before his day?

Not a kindlier life or sweeter,
Time, that lights and quenches men,
Now may quench or light again;
Mingling with the mystic metre
Woven of all men's lives with his,
Not a clearer note than this,
Not a kindlier life or sweeter.

In this heavenliest part of earth
He that living loved the light,
Light and song, may rest aright,
One in death, if strange in birth,
With the deathless dead that make
Life the lovelier for their sake
In this heavenliest part of earth.

Light, and song, and sleep at last, —
Struggling hands and suppliant knees
Get no goodlier gift than these.
Song that holds remembrance fast,
Light that lightens death, attend
Round their graves who have to

friend Light, and song, and sleep at last.

## INFERIÆ.

SPRING, and the light and sound of things on earth

Re-quickening, all within our green

sea's girth;

A time of passage or a time of birth Fourscore years since as this year, first and last.

The sun is all about the world we see, The breath and strength of very spring; and we

Live, love, and feed on our own hearts:

Whose heart fed mine has passed into the past.

Past, all things born with sense and blood and breath;

The flesh hears naught that now the spirit saith.

If death be like as birth, and birth as death,

The first was fair — more fair should be the last.

Fourscore years since, and come but one month more,

The count were perfect of his mortal score

Whose sail went seaward yesterday from shore

To cross the last of many an unsailed sea.

Light, love, and labor up to life's last height,—

These three were stars unsetting in his English,

Even as the sun is life and heat and light,

And sets not nor is dark when dark are we.

The life, the spirit, and the work were one That here—ah! who shall say, that here are done?

Not I, that know not; father, not thy son, For all the darkness of the night and sea.

MARCH 5, 1877.

## A BIRTH-SONG.

(For Olivia Frances Madox Rossetti, born Sept 20, 1875.)

OUT of the dark sweet sleep Where no dreams laugh or weep, Borne through bright gates of birth Into the dim sweet light

Where day still dreams of night While heaven takes form on earth, White rose of spirit and flesh, red lily

of love,

What note of song have we Fit for the birds and thee,

Fair nestling couched beneath the mother-dove?

Nay, in some more divine
Small speechless song of thine
Some news too good for words,
Heart-hushed and smiling, we
Might hope to have of thee,

The youngest of God's birds,
If thy sweet sense might mix itself with
ours,

If ours might understand
The language of thy land,
Ere thine become the tongue of mortal

Ere thy lips learn too soon
Their soft first human tune,
Sweet, but less sweet than now,
And thy raised eyes to read
Glad and good things indeed,
But none so sweet as thou:

Ere thought lift up their flower-soft lids to see

What life and love on earth
Bring thee for gifts at birth,
But none so good as thine who hast
given us thee:

Now, ere thy sense forget
The heaven that fills it yet,
Now, sleeping or awake,
If thou couldst tell, or we
Ask and be heard of thee,
For love's undying sake,

From thy dumb lips divine and bright mute speech
Such news might touch our ear
That then would burn to hear
Too high a message now for man's to

Ere the gold hair of corn
Had withered wast thou born,
To make the good time glad;
The time that but last year
Fell colder than a tear
On hearts and hopes turned sad.
High hopes and hearts requickening in
thy dawn,
Even theirs whose life-springs, child,
Filled thine with life and smiled,
But then wept blood for half their own

withdrawn.1

If death and birth be one,
And set with rise of sun,
And truth with dreams divine,
Some word might come with thee
From over the still sea
Deep hid in shade or shine,
Crossed by the crossing sails of death
and birth,
Word of some sweet new thing
Fit for such lips to bring,
Some word of love, some afterthought
of earth.

If love be strong as death,
By what so natural breath
As thine could this be said?
By what so lovely way
Could love send word to say
He lives and is not dead?
Such word alone were fit for only thee,
If his and thine have met
Where spirits rise and set,
His whom we see not, thine whom
scarce we see:

His there new-born, as thou New-born among us now; His, here so fruitful-souled, Now veiled and silent here,
Now dumb as thou last year,
A ghost of one year old:
If lights that change their sphere in
changing meet,

Some ray might his not give
To thine who wast to live,
And make thy present with his past life
sweet?

Let dreams that laugh or weep,
All glad and sad dreams, sleep;
Truth more than dreams is dear.
Let thoughts that change and fly,
Sweet thoughts and swift, go by;
More than all thought is here.
More than all hope can forge, or memory feign,

The life that in our eyes,
Made out of love's life, lies,
And flower-like fed with love for sun
and rain.

Twice royal in his root
The sweet small olive-shoot
Here set in sacred earth;
Twice dowered with glorious grace
From either heaven-born race
First blended in its birth;
Fair god or genius of so fair an hour,
For love of either name
Twice crowned, with love and fame,
Guard and be gracious to the fair-named
flower.

Ост. 19, 1875.

## EX-VOTO.

When their last hour shall rise
Pale on these mortal eyes,
Herself like one that dies,
And kiss me dying
The cold last kiss, and fold
Close round my limbs her cold
Soft shade as raiment rolled,
And leave them lying,—

If aught my soul would say Might move to hear me pray The birth-god of my day That he might hearken,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Oliver Madox Brown died Nov. 5, 1874, in his twentieth year.

This grace my heart should crave, —
To find no landward grave
That worldly springs make brave,
World's winters darken, —

Nor grow through gradual hours
The cold blind seed of flowers
Made by new beams and showers
From limbs that moulder,
Nor take my part with earth;
But find for death's new birth
A bed of larger girth,
More chaste and colder.

Not earth's for spring and fall, Not earth's at heart, not all Earth's making, though men call Earth only mother, Not hers at heart she bare Me, but thy child, O fair Sea, and thy brother's care, The wind thy brother.

Yours was I born, and ye, The sea-wind and the sea, Made all my soul in me A song forever, A harp to string and smite For love's sake of the bright Wind and the sea's delight, To fail them never:

Not while on this side death I hear what either saith, And drink of either's breath With heart's thanksgiving That in my veins like wine

Some sharp salt blood of thine, Some springtide pulse of brine, Yet leaps up living.

When thy salt lips well-nigh Sucked in my mouth's last sigh, Grudged I so much to die

This death as others?
Was it no ease to think
The chalice from whose brink
Fate gave me death to drink
Was thine, — my mother's?

Thee too, the all-fostering earth, Fair as thy fairest birth,

More than thy worthiest worth, We call, we know thee, More sweet and just and dread Than live men highest of head Or even thy holiest dead Laid low below thee.

The sunbeam on the sheaf,
The dew-fall on the leaf,
All joy, all grace, all grief,
Are thine for giving:
Of thee our loves are born,
Our lives and loves, that mourn
And triumph; tares with corn,
Dead seed with living;

All good and ill things done
In eye-shot of the sun
At last in thee made one
Rest well contented;
All words of all man's breath,
And works he doth or saith,
All wholly done to death,
None long lamented.

A slave to sons of thee, Thou, seeming, yet art free; But who shall make the sea Serve even in seeming? What plough shall bid it bear Seed to the sun and the air, Fruit for thy strong sons' fare, Fresh wine's foam streaming?

What old-world son of thine,
Made drunk with death as wine,
Hath drunk the bright sea's brine
With lips of laughter?
Thy blood they drink; but he
Who hath drunken of the sea
Once deeplier than of thee
Shall drink not after.

Of thee thy sons of men
Drink deep, and thirst again,—
For wine in feasts, and then
In fields for slaughter;
But thirst shall touch not him
Who hath felt with sense grown dim
Rise, covering lip and limb,
The wan sea's water.

All fire of thirst that aches
The salt sea cools and slakes
More than all springs or lakes,
Freshets or shallows;
Wells where no beam can burn
Through frondage of the fern
That hides from hart and hern
The haunt it hallows.

Peace with all graves on earth
For death or sleep or birth
Be alway, one in worth
One with another;
But when my time shall be,
O mother, O my sea,
Alive or dead, take me,
Me too, my mother!

## PASTICHE.

Now the days are all gone over Of our singing, love by lover, Days of summer-colored seas Blown adrift through beam and breeze.

Now the nights are all past over Of our dreaming, dreams that hover In a mist of fair false things, Nights afloat on wide wan wings.

Now the loves with faith for mother, Now the fears with hope for brother, Scarce are with us as strange words, Notes from songs of last year's birds.

Now all good that comes or goes is As the smell of last year's roses, As the radiance in our eyes Shot from summer's ere he dies.

Now the morning faintlier risen Seems no god come forth of prison, But a bird of plume-plucked wing, Pale with thoughts of evening.

Now hath hope, out-raced in running, Given the torch up of his cunning, And the palm he thought to wear, Even to his own strong child, — despair.

## BEFORE SUNSET.

In the lower lands of day
On the hither side of night,
There is nothing that will stay,
There are all things soft to sight;
Lighted shade and shadowy light
In the wayside and the way,
Hours the sun has spared to smite,
Flowers the rain has left to play.

Shall these hours run down and say
No good thing of thee and me?
Time that made us and will slay
Laughs at love in me and thee;
But if here the flowers may see
One whole hour of amorous breath,
Time shall die, and love shall be
Lord as time was over death.

## SONG.

Love laid his sleepless head On a thorny rosy bed; And his eyes with tears were red, And pale his lips as the dead.

And fear and sorrow and scorn Kept watch by his head forlorn, Till the night was overworn, And the world was merry with morn.

And Joy came up with the day, And kissed Love's lips as he lay, And the watchers ghostly and gray Sped from his pillow away.

And his eyes as the dawn grew br'g't. And his lips waxed ruddy as light: Sorrow may reign for a night, But day shall bring back delight.

# A VISION OF SPRING IN WINTER.

T.

O TENDER time that love thinks long to see, Sweet foot of spring that with he footfall sows Late snow-like flowery leavings of the snows,

Be not too long irresolute to be!

O mother-month, where have they hidden thee?

Out of the pale time of the flowerless rose,

rose,
I reach my heart out toward the springtime lands.

I stretch my spirit forth to the fair hours,

The purplest of the prime;

I lean my soul down over them, with hands

Made wide to take the ghostly growths of flowers;

I send my love back to the lovely time.

#### II.

Where has the greenwood hid thy gracious head?

Veiled with what visions while the gray world grieves,

Or muffled with what shadows of green leaves,

With warm intangible green shadows spread

To sweeten the sweet twilight for thy bed?

What sleep enchants thee? what delight deceives?

Where the deep dreamlike dew before the dawn

Feels not the fingers of the sunlight yet

Its silver web unweave,

Thy footless ghost on some unfooted lawn

Whose air the unrisen sunbeams fear to fret

Lives a ghost's life of daylong dawn and eve.

#### III.

Sunrise it sees not, neither set of star, Large nightfall, nor imperial plenilune,

Nor strong sweet shape of the full-breasted noon;

But where the silver-sandalled shadows are,

Too soft for arrows of the sun to mar. Moves with the mild gait of an un-

grown moon:

Hard overhead the half-lit crescent swims,

The tender-colored night draws hardly breath,

The light is listening;

They watch the dawn of slender-shapen limbs,

Virginal, born again of doubtful death, Chill foster-father of the weanling spring.

#### IV.

As sweet desire of day before the day,
As dreams of love before the true
love born.

From the outer edge of winter over-

The ghost arisen of May before the

Takes through dim air her unawakened way,

The gracious ghost of morning risen ere morn.

With little unblown breasts and childeyed looks

Following, the very maid, the girlchild spring,

Lifts windward her bright brows, Dips her light feet in warm and moving brooks.

And kindles with her own mouth's coloring

The fearful firstlings of the plumeless boughs.

#### v.

I seek thee sleeping, and awhile I see. Fair face that art not, how thy maiden breath.

Shall put at last the deadly days to death,

And fill the fields and fire the woods with thee,

And seaward hollows where my feet would be

When heaven shall hear the word that April saith To change the cold heart of the weary time,

To stir and soften all the time to tears,

Tears joyfuller than mirth;

As even to May's clear height the young days climb

With feet not swifter than those fair first years

Whose flowers revive not with thy flowers on earth.

#### VI.

I would not bid thee, though I might, give back

One good thing youth has given and borne away:

I crave not any comfort of the day 'That is not, nor on time's re-trodden

track

Would turn to meet the white-robed hours or black

That long since left me on their mortal way;

Nor light nor love that has been, nor the breath

That comes with morning from the sun to be,

And sets light hope on fire;

No fruit, no flower thought once too fair for death,

No flower nor hour once fallen from life's green tree,

No leaf once plucked, or once fulfilled desire.

#### VII.

The morning song beneath the stars that fled

With twilight through the moonless mountain air,

While youth with burning lips and wreathless hair

Sang toward the sun that was to crown his head,

Rising; the hopes that triumphed and fell dead,

The sweet swift eyes and songs of hours that were, —

These may'st thou not give back forever; these. As at the sea's heart all her wrecks lie waste,

Lie deeper than the sea.

But flowers thou may'st, and winds, and hours of ease,

And all its April to the world thou may'st

Give back, and half my April back to me.

## AT PARTING.

For a day and night Love sang to us, played with us,

Folded us round from the dark and the light;

And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he made with us,

Made with our hearts and our lips while he stayed with us, Stayed in mid passage his pinions

from flight

For a day and a night.

From his foes that kept watch with his wings had he hidden us,

Covered us close from the eyes that would smite,

From the feet that had tracked and the tongues that had chidden us

Sheltering in shade of the myrtles forbidden us

Spirit and flesh growing one with delight

For a day and a night.

But his wings will not rest, and his feet will not stay for us:

Morning is here in the joy of its might;

With his breath has he sweetened a night and a day for us:

Now let him pass, and the myrtles make way for us;

Love can but last in us here at his height

For a day and a night.

# THE WHITE CZAR.

[In an English magazine of 1877, there appeared a version of some insolent lines addressed by "A Russian Poet to the Empress of India." To these the first of the two following sonnets was designed to serve by way of counterblast. The writer will scarcely be suspected of royalism or imperialism; but it seemed to him that an insult levelled by Muscovite lips at the ruler of England might perhaps be less unfitly than unofficially resented by an Englishman who was also a republican.

I.

GEHAZI by the hue that chills thy

And Pilate by the hue that sears thine hand

Whence all earth's waters cannot wash the brand

That signs thy soul a manslayer's though thou speak

All Christ, with lips most murderous and most meek -Thou set thy foot where England's

used to stand!

Thou reach thy rod forth over Indian land! Slave of the slaves that call thee lord,

and weak As their foul tongues who praise thee!

son of them Whose presence put the snows and stars

to shame In centuries dead and damned that reek below

Curse-consecrated, crowned with crime and flame.

To them that bare thee like them shalt thou go

Forth of man's life, - a leper white as snow.

II.

Call for clear water, wash thine hands, be clean.

Cry, What is truth? O Pilate! thou shalt know

Haply too soon, and gnash thy teeth

Ere the outer darkness take thee round unseen

That hides the red ghosts of thy race obscene

Bound nine times round with hell's most dolorous flow,

And in its pools thy crownless head lie low

By his of Spain who dared an English queen

With half a world to hearten him for fight,

Till the wind gave his warriors and their might

To shipwreck and the corpse-encumbered sea.

But thou, take heed, ere yet thy lips wax white,

Lest as it was with Philip so it

O white of name and red of hand, with thee !

# RIZPAH.

How many sons, how many generations.

For how long years hast thou bewept, and known

Nor end of torment nor surcease of moan,

Rachel or Rizpah, wofullest of nations,

Crowned with the crowning sign of desolations. And couldst not even scare off with

hand or groan

Those carrion birds devouring bone by bone

The children of thy thousand tribulations? Thou wast our warrior once; thy sons

long dead

Against a foe less foul than this made head.

Poland, in years that sound and shine afar;

Ere the east beheld in thy bright swordblade's stead

The rotten corpse-light of the Russian

That lights towards hell his bondslaves and their Czar.

# TO LOUIS KOSSUTH.

LIGHT of our fathers' eyes, and in our

Star of the unsetting sunset! for thy name,

That on the front of noon was as a flame

In the great year nigh thirty years agone When all the heavens of Europe shook and shone

With stormy wind and lightning, keeps its fame

And bears its witness all day through the same.

Not for past days and great deeds past alone.

Kossuth, we praise thee as our Landor praised;

But that now too we know thy voice upraised, —

Thy voice, the trumpet of the truth of God.

Thine hand, the thunder bearer's, raised to smite

As with heaven's lightning for a sword and rod

Men's heads abased before the Muscovite.

# THE PILGRIMS.

Who is your lady of love, O ye that pass Singing? and is it for sorrow of that which was

That ye sing sadly or dream of what I shall be?

For gladly at once and sadly it seems ye sing.

Our lady of love by you is un beholden;

For hands she hath none, nor eyes, nor lips, nor golden

Treasure of hair, nor face nor form.
But we

That love, we know her more fair than any thing.

- Is she a queen, having great gifts to give?

- Yea, these that whose hath seen her shall not live Except he serve her sorrowing, with strange pain,

Travail and bloodshedding an bitterer tears;

And when she bids die he shall surely

And he shall leave all things under the sky,

And go forth naked under sun and rain,

And work and wait and watch out all his years.

- Hath she on earth no place of habitation?

- Age to age calling, nation answering nation,

Cries out, Where is she? and there is none to say;

For if she be not in the spirit of men, For if in the inward soul she hath no place,

In vain they cry unto her, seeking her face,

In vain their mouths make much of her; for they

Cry with vain tongues, till the heart lives again.

— O ye that follow, and have ye no repentance?

For on your brows is written a mortal sentence.

An hieroglyph of sorrow, a fiery sign, That in your lives ye shall not pause or rest,

Nor have the sure sweet common love, nor keep

Friends and safe days, nor joy of life nor sleep.

- These have we not, who have one thing, the divine

Face and clear eyes of faith and fruitful breast.

- And ye shall die before your thrones be won.

- Yea, and the changed world and the liberal sun

Shall move and shine without us, and we lie

Dead; but if. she too move on earth, and live,

But if the old world with all the old irons rent

Laugh and give thanks, shall we be not content?

Nay, we shall rather live, we shall not die.

Life being so little, and death so good to give.

- And these men shall forget you. -Yea, but we

Shall be a part of the earth and the ancient sea,

And heaven-high air august, and awful fire.

And all things good; and no man's heart shall beat

But somewhat in it of our blood once

Shall quiver and quicken, as now in us the dead

Blood of men slain and the old same life's desire

Plants in their fiery footprints our fresh feet.

-- But ye that might be clothed with all things pleasant,

Ye are foolish that put off the fair soft present,

That clothe yourselves with the cold future air:

When mother and father and tender sister and brother

And the old live love that was shall be as ye,

Dust, and no fruit of loving life shall - She shall be yet who is more than

all these were,

Than sister or wife or father unto us or mother.

- Is this worth life, is this, to win for wages?

Lo, the dead mouths of the awful graygrown ages,

The venerable, in the past that is their prison,

In the outer darkness, in the unopening grave,

Laugh, knowing how many as ye now | That all men born are mortal, but not say have said,

How many, and all are fallen, are fallen and dead:

Shall ye dead rise, and these dead have not risen?

- Not we but she, who is tender, and swift to save.

- Are ye not weary and faint not by the way,

Seeing night by night devoured of day by day,

Seeing hour by hour consumed in sleepless fire?

Sleepless; and ye too, when shall ye too sleep?

- We are weary in heart and head, in hands and feet, And surely more than all things sleep

were sweet, -

Than all things save the inexorable desire

Which whose knoweth shall neither faint nor weep.

-Is this so sweet that one were fain to follow?

Is this so sure where all men's hopes are hollow.

Even this your dream, that by much tribulation

Ye shall make whole flawed hearts, and bowed necks straight?

- Nay, though our life were blind, our death were fruitless. Not therefore were the whole world's

high hope rootless; But man to man, nation would turn

to nation.

And the old life live, and the old great word be great.

- Pass on, then, and pass by us, and let us be.

For what light think ye after life to see?

And if the world fare better will ye know?

And if man triumph who shall seek you and say?

- Enough of light is this for one life's span,

man:

And we men bring death lives by night to sow,

That man may reap and eat and live by day.

# THE LITANY OF NATIONS.

μᾶ Γᾶ, μᾶ Γᾶ, βοάν φοβερον απότρεπε. ÆSCH. Supp. 890.

#### CHORUS.

If with voice of words or prayers thy sons may reach thee,

We thy latter sons, the men thine

after-birth,

We the children of thy gray-grown age, O Earth,

O our mother everlasting, we beseech thee,

By the sealed and secret ages of thy life;

By the darkness wherein grew thy sacred forces;

By the songs of stars thy sisters in their courses;

By thine own song hoarse and hollow and shrill with strife;

By thy voice distuned and marred of

modulation; By the discord of thy measure's

march with theirs; By the beauties of thy bosom, and

the cares; by thy glory of growth, and splendor of thy station;

By the shame of men thy children, and the pride;

By the pale-cheeked hope that sleeps and weeps and passes,

As the gray dew from the morning mountain grasses;

By the white-lipped sightless memories that abide;

By the silence and the sound of many sorrows; By the joys that leapt up living and

fell dead; By the veil that hides thy hands and

breasts and head, Wrought of divers-colored days and nights and morrows;

Isis, thou that knowest of God what worlds are worth,

Thou the ghost of God, the mother uncreated.

Soul for whom the floating forceless ages waited

As our forceless fancies wait on thee, O Earth;

Thou the body and soul, the father-god and mother,

If at all it move thee, knowing of all things done

Here where evil things and good things are not one,

But their faces are as fire against each other;

By thy morning and thine evening, night and day;

By the first white light that stirs and strives and hovers

As a bird above the brood her bosom covers.

By the sweet last star that takes the westward way;

By the night whose feet are shod with snow or thunder,

Fledged with plumes of storm, or soundless as the dew;

By the vesture bound of many-folded

Round her breathless breasts, and all the woven wonder;

By the golden-growing eastern stream of sea:

By the sounds of sunrise moving in the mountains;

By the forces of the floods and unsealed fountains;

Thou that badest man be born, bid man be free.

#### GREECE.

I am she that made thee lovely with my beauty

From north to south:

Mine, the fairest lips, took first the fire of duty

From thine own mouth.

Mine, the fairest eyes, sought first thy laws, and knew them

Truths undefiled;

Mine, the fairest hands, took freedom first into them,

A weanling child.

By my light, now he lies sleeping, seen above him

Where none sees other;

By my dead that loved, and living men that love him, —
(Cho.) Hear us, O mother!

#### ITALY.

I am she that was the light of thee enkindled

When Greece grew dim;

She whose life grew up with man's free life, and dwindled

With wane of him;

She that once by sword and once by word imperial

Struck bright thy gloom;

And a third time, casting off these years funereal,

Shall burst thy tomb.

By that bond 'twixt thee and me whereat affrighted

Thy tyrants fear us;

By that hope and this remembrance reunited, —

(Cho.) O mother, hear us!

#### SPAIN.

I am she that set thy seal upon the nameless

West worlds of seas;

And my sons as brides took unto them the tameless

Hesperides;

Till my sins and sons through sinless lands dispersed,

With red flame shod,

Made accurst the name of man, and thrice accursed

The name of God.

Lest for those past fires the fires of my repentance

Hell's fume yet smother,

Now my blood would buy remission of my sentence,—

(Cho.) Hear us, O mother !

### FRANCE.

I am she that was thy sign and standardbearer,

Thy voice and cry;

She that washed thee with her blood, and left thee fairer,

The same was I.

Were not these the hands that raised thee fallen, and fed thee,

These hands defiled?

Was not I thy tongue that spake, thine eye that led thee, —

Not I thy child?

By the darkness on our dreams, and the dead errors

Of dead times near us;

By the hopes that hang around thee, and the terrors,— (Cho.) O mother, hear us!

## RUSSIA.

I am she whose hands are strong, and her eyes blinded, And lips athirst,

Till upon the night of nations manyminded

One bright day burst;

Till the myriad stars be molten into one light,

And that light thine;

Till the soul of man be parcel of the sunlight,

And thine of mine.

By the snows that blanch not him, nor cleanse from slaughter, Who slavs his brother;

By the stains and by the chains on me thy daughter,—

(Cho.) Hear us, O mother!

#### SWITZERLAND.

I am she that shows on mighty limbs and maiden

Nor chain nor stain;

For what blood can touch these hands with gold unladen,

These feet what chain?

By the surf of spears one shieldless bosom breasted,

And was my shield,

Till the plume-plucked Austrian vulture-heads twin-crested

Twice drenched the field.

By the snows and souls untrampled and untroubled

That shine to cheer us,

Light of those to these responsive and redoubled, -

(Cho.) O mother, hear us!

#### GERMANY.

I am she beside whose forest-hidden fountains

Slept freedom armed;

By the magic born to music in my mountains,

Heart-chained and charmed.

By those days, the very dream whereof delivers

My soul from wrong;

By the sounds that make of all my ringing rivers

None knows what song;

By the many tribes and names of my division

One from another;

By the single eye of sun-compelling vision, -

(Cho.) Hear us, O mother !

#### ENGLAND.

I am she that was and was not of thy chosen.

Free, and not free;

She that fed thy springs, till now her springs are frozen;

Yet I am she.

By the sea that clothed and sun that saw me splendid And fame that crowned,

By the song-fires and the sword-fires mixed and blended

That robed me round;

By the star that Milton's soul for Shelley's lighted,

Whose rays insphere us;

By the beacon-bright Republic far-off sighted, -

(Cho.) O mother, hear us !

#### CHORUS.

Turn away from us the cross-blown blasts of error.

That drown each other:

Turn away the fearful cry, the loudtongued terror,

O Earth, O mother!

Turn away their eyes who track, their hearts who follow,

The pathless past;

Show the soul of man, as summer shows the swallow. The way at last.

By the sloth of men that all too long endure men

On man to tread;

By the cry of men, the bitter cry of poor men

That faint for bread:

By the blood-sweat of the people in the garden

Inwalled of kings;

By his passion interceding for their par-

Who do these things;

By the sightless souls and fleshless limbs that labor For not their fruit:

By the foodless mouth with foodless heart for neighbor, That, mad, is mute;

By the child that famine eats as worms the blossom -

Ah God, the child!—

By the milkless lips that strain the bloodless bosom

Till woe runs wild;

By the pastures that give grass to feed the lamb in,

Where men lack meat;

By the cities clad with gold and shame and famine;

By field and street;

By the people, by the poor man, by the master

That men call slave;

By the cross-winds of defeat and of disaster,

By wreck, by wave;

By the helm that keeps us still to sunwards driving,

Still eastward bound,

Till, as night-watch ends, day burn on eyes reviving,

And land be found:

We thy children, that arraign not nor impeach thee Though no star steer us,

By the waves that wash the morning we beseech thee, O mother, hear us!

## CHRISTMAS ANTIPHONES

I.

## IN CHURCH.

Thou whose birth on earth Angels sang to men, While thy stars made mirth, Saviour, at thy birth, This day born again.

As this night was bright
With thy cradle-ray.
Very light of light,
Turn the wild world's night
To thy perfect day

God whose feet made sweet
Those wild ways they trod,
From thy fragrant feet
Staining field and street
With the blood of God;

God whose breast is rest In the time of strife, In thy secret breast Sheltering souls opprest From the heat of life;

God whose eyes are skies Love-lit as with spheres By the lights that rise To thy watching eyes, Orbed lights of tears;

God whose heart hath part
In all grief that is,
Was not man's the dart
That went through thine heart,
And the wound not his?

Where the pale souls wail, Held in bonds of death, Where all spirits quail, Came thy Godhead pale Still from human breath,—

Pale from life and strife, Wan with manhood, came Forth of mortal life, Pierced as with a knife, Scarred as with a flame.

Thou the Word and Lord In all time and space. Heard, beheld, adored, With all ages poured Forth before thy face,—

Lord, what worth in earth Drew thee down to die? What therein was worth, Lord, thy death and birth? What beneath thy sky.?

Light above all love
By thy love was lit,
And brought down the Dove
Feathered from above
With the wings of it.

From the height of night, Was not thine the star That led forth with might By no worldly light Wise men from afar?

Yet the wise men's eyes
Saw thee not more clear
Than they saw thee rise
Who in shepherds' guise
Drew as poor men near.

Yet thy poor endure,
And are with us yet.
Be thy name a sure
Refuge for thy poor
Whom men's eyes forget.

Thou whose ways we praise, Clear alike and dark, Keep our works and ways This and all thy days Safe inside thine ark. Who shall keep thy sheep, Lord, and lose not one? Who save one shall keep, Lest the shepherds sleep? Who beside the Son?

From the grave-deep wave, From the sword and flame, Thou, even thou, shalt save Souls of king and slave Only by thy Name.

Light not born with morn
Or her fires above,
Jesus virgin-born,
Held of men in scorn,
Turn their scorn to love.

Thou whose face gives grace
As the sun's doth heat,
Let thy sun-bright face
Lighten time and space
Here beneath thy feet.

Bid our peace increase,
Thou that madest morn;
Bid oppressions cease;
Bid the night be peace;
Bid the day be born.

II.

OUTSIDE CHURCH.

We whose days and ways
All the night makes dark,—
What day shall we praise
Of these weary days
That our life-drops mark?

We whose mind is blind, Fed with hope of naught; Wastes of worn mankind, Without heart or mind, Without meat or thought,

We with strife of life
Worn till all life cease,
Want, a whetted knife,
Sharpening strife on strife,
How should we love peace?

Ye whose meat is sweet And your wine-cap red, Us beneath your feet Hunger grinds as wheat,— Grinds to make you bread.

Ye whose night is bright With soft rest and heat, Clothed like day with light, Us the naked night Slays from street to street.

Hath your God no rod,
That ye tread so light?
Man on us as God,
God as man hath trod,
Trod us down with might.

We that one by one Bleed from either's rod, What for us hath done Man beneath the sun, What for us hath God?

We whose blood is food Given your wealth to feed, From the Christless rood Red with no God's blood, But with man's indeed;

How shall we that see Night-long overhead Life, the flowerless tree, Nailed whereon as we Were our fathers dead,—

We whose ear can hear,
Not whose tongue can name,
Famine, ignorance, fear,
Bleeding tear by tear
Year by year of shame,—

Till the dry life die
Out of bloodless breast.
Out of beamless eye,
Out of mouths that cry
Till death feed with rest.—

How shall we as ye,
Though ye bid us, pray?
Though ye call, can we
Hear you call, or see,
Though ye show us day?

We whose name is shame,
We whose souls walk bare,
Shall we call the same
God as ye by name,
Teach our lips your prayer?—

God, forgive and give,
For His sake who died? —
Nay, for ours who live,
How shall we forgive
Thee, then, on our side?

We whose right to light Heaven's high noon denies, Whom the blind beams smite That for you shine bright, And but burn our eyes,—

With what dreams of beams Shall we build up day, At what sourceless streams Seek to drink in dreams Ere they pass away?

In what street shall meet, At what market-place, Your feet and our feet, With one goal to greet, Having run one race?

What one hope shall ope
For us all as one
One same horoscope,
Where the soul sees hope
That outburns the sun?

At what shrine what wine, At what board what bread, Salt as blood or brine, Shall we share in sign How we poor were fed?

In what hour what power Shall we pray for morn, If your perfect hour, When all day bears flower, Not for us is born?

#### III.

BEYOND CHURCH.

Ye that weep in sleep, Souls and bodies bound, Ye that all night keep Watch for change, and weep That no change is found;

Ye that cry and die, And the world goes on Without ear or eye, And the days go by Till all days are gone:

Man shall do for you,
Men the sons of man,
What no god would do
That they sought unto
While the blind years ran.

Brotherhood of good, Equal laws and rights, Freedom, whose sweet food Feeds the multitude All their days and nights

With the bread full-fed
Of her body blest
And the soul's wine shed
From her table spread
Where the world is guest,—

Mingling me and thee, When like light of eyes Flashed through thee and me Truth shall make us free, Liberty make wise:

These are they whom day Follows and gives light Whence they see to slay Night, and burn away All the seed of night.

What of thine and mine,
What of want and wealth,
When one faith is wine
For my heart and thine,
And one draught is health?

For no sect elect
Is the soul's wine poured,
And her table decked:
Whom should man reject
From man's common board?

Gods refuse and choose, Grudge and sell and spare: None shall man refuse, None of all men lose, None leave out of care.

No man's might of sight Knows that hour before; No man's hand hath might To put back that light For one hour the more.

Not though all men call, Kneeling with void hands, Shall they see light fall Till it come for all Tribes of men and lands.

No desire brings fire
Down from heaven by prayer,
Though man's vain desire
Hang faith's wind-struck lyre
Out in tuneless air.

One hath breath, and saith What the tune shall be, — Time, who puts his breath Into life and death, Into earth and sea.

To and fro years flow,
Fill their tides and ebb,
As his fingers go
Weaving to and fro
One unfinished web.

All the range of change
Hath its bounds therein,
All the lives that range
All the byways strange
Named of death or sin.

Star from far to star
Speaks, and white moons wake,
Watchful from afar
What the night's ways are
For the morning's sake.

Many names and flames
Pass and flash and fall,
Night-begotten names,
And the night reclaims,
As she bare them, all.

But the sun is one,
And the sun's name Right;
And when light is none
Saving of the sun,
All men shall have light

All shall see and be Parcel of the morn:
Ay, though blind were we,
None shall choose but see
When that day is born.

## MATER DOLOROSA.

Citoyen, lui dit Enjolras, ma mère, c'est la République. — Les Misèrables.

Who is it that sits by the way, by the wild wayside, In a rent stained raiment, the robe of a

cast-off bride,

In the dust, in the rainfall sitting, with soiled feet bare,

With the night for a garment upon her, with torn wet hair?

She is fairer of face than the daughters of men, and her eyes,

Worn through with her tears, are deep as the depth of skies.

This is she for whose sake being fallen, for whose abject sake,

Earth groans in the blackness of darkness, and men's hearts break.

This is she for whose love, having seen her, the men that were

Poured life out as water, and shed their souls upon air.

This is she for whose glory their years were counted as foam;

Whose face was a light upon Greece, was a fire upon Rome.

Is it now not surely a vain thing, a foolish and vain,

To sit down by her, mourn to her, serve her, partake in the pain?

She is gray with the dust of time on his manifold ways,

Where her faint feet stumble and falter through yearlong days. Shall she help us at all, O fools, give

Shall she help us at all, O fools, give fruit or give fame,

Who herself is a name despised, a rejected name?

We have not served her for guerdon.

If any do so,

That his mouth may be sweet with such honey, we care not to know.

We have drunk from a wine-unsweetened, a perilous cup,

A draught very bitter. The kings of the earth stood up,

And the rulers took counsel together, to smite her and slay;

And the blood of her wounds is given us to drink to-day.

Can these bones live? or the leaves that are dead leaves bud?

Or the dead blood drawn from her veins be in your veins blood?

Will we gather up water again that was

Will ye gather up water again that was drawn and shed?

In the blood is the life of the veins, and her veins are dead.

For the lives that are over are over, and past things past;

She had her day, and it is not; was first, and is last.

Is it nothing unto you, then, all ye that pass by,

If her breath be left in her lips, if she live now or die?

Behold now, O people, and say if she be not fair,

Whom your fathers followed to find her, with praise and prayer,

And rejoiced, having found her, though roof they had none, nor bread.

But ye care not: what is it to you if her day be dead?

It was well with our fathers; their sound was in all men's lands;

There was fire in their hearts, and the hunger of fight in their hands.

Naked and strong they went forth in her strength like flame,

For her love's and her name's sake of old, her republican name.

But their children, by kings made quiet, by priests made wise,

Love better the heat of their hearths than the light of her eyes.

Are they children of these thy children indeed, who have sold,

O golden goddess, the light of thy face for gold? Are they sons indeed of the sons of thy

dayspring of hope,

Whose lives are in fief of an emperor, whose souls of a Pope?

Hide then thine head, O beloved! thy time is done;

Thy kingdom is broken in heaven, and blind thy sun.

What sleep is upon you, to dream she indeed shall rise,

When the hopes are dead in her heart as the tears in her eyes?

If ye sing of her dead, will she stir? if ye weep for her, weep?

Come away now, leave her: what hath

she to do but sleep?

But ye that mourn are alive, and have years to be;

And life is good, and the world is wiser than we.

Yea, wise is the world and mighty, with years to give,

And years to promise; but how long now shall it live?

And foolish and poor is faith, and her ways are bare,

Till she find the way of the sun, and the morning air.

In that hour shall this dead face shine as the face of the sun,

And the soul of man and her soul and the world's be one.

# MATER TRIUMPHALIS.

MOTHER of man's time-travelling generations,

Breath of his nostrils, heart-blood of his heart.

God above all gods, worshipped of all nations,

Light above light, law beyond law, thou art.

Thy face is as a sword, smiting in sunder

Shadows and chains, and dreams and iron things;

The sea is dumb before thy face, the thunder

Silent, the skies are narrower than thy wings.

Angels and gods, spirit and sense, thou takest

In thy right hand as drops of dust or dew:

The temples and the towers of time thou breakest,

His thoughts and words and works, to make them new.

All we have wandered from thy ways,

Eyes from thy glory and ears from calls they heard;

Called of thy trumpets vainly, called and chidden,

Scourged of thy speech, and wounded of thy word.

We have known thee, and have not known thee; stood beside thee, Felt thy lips breathe, set foot where

thy feet trod,
Loved and renounced, and worshipped

and denied thee,
As though thou wert but as another
god.

One hour for sleep," we said, "and yet one other;

All day we served her, and who shall serve by night?"

Not knowing of thee, thy face not knowing, O mother,

O light wherethrough the darkness is as light.

Men that forsook thee hast thou not forsaken,

Races of men that knew not hast thou known;

Nations that slept thou hast doubted not to waken,

Worshippers of strange gods to make thine own.

All old gray histories hiding thy clear features,

O secret spirit and sovereign, all men's tales,

Creeds woven of men, thy children and thy creatures,

They have woven for vestures of thee and for veils.

Thine hands, without election or exemp-

Feed all men fainting from false peace or strife,

O thou, the resurrection and redemption,

The godhead and the manhood and the life.

Thy wings shadow the waters; thine eyes lighten

The horror of the hollows of the night;

The depths of the earth and the dark places brighten

Under thy feet, whiter than fire is white.

Death is subdued to thee, and hell's bands broken;

Where thou art only is heaven: who hears not thee,

Time shall not hear him; when men's names are spoken,

A nameless sign of death shall his

Deathless shall be the death, the name be nameless;

Sterile of stars his twilight time of breath;

With fire of hell shall shame consume him shameless,

And dying, all the night darken his death.

The years are as thy garments, the world's ages

As sandals bound and loosed from thy swift feet;

Time serves before thee, as one that hath for wages

Praise or shame only, bitter words or sweet.

Thou sayest "Well done," and all a century kindles;

Again, thou sayest, "Depart from sight of me,"

And all the light of face of all men dwindles,

And the age is as the broken glass of thee.

The night is as a seal set on men's faces,

On faces fallen of men that take no light,

Nor give light in the deeps of the dark places,

Blind things, incorporate with the body of night.

Their souls are serpents winter-bound and frozen,

Their shame is as a tame beast, at their feet

Couched; their cold lips deride thee and thy chosen,

Their lying lips made gray with dust for meat.

Then when their time is full and days run over,

The splendor of thy sudden brow made bare

Darkens the morning; thy bared hands uncover

The veils of light and night and the awful air.

And the world naked as a new-born maiden

Stands virginal and splendid as at birth,

With all thine heaven of all its light unladen,

Of all its love unburdened all thine earth.

For the utter earth and the utter air of heaven,

And the extreme depth is thine, and the extreme height;

Shadows of things and veils of ages

Are as men's kings unkingdomed in thy sight.

Through the iron years, the centuries brazen-gated,

By the ages' barred, impenetrable doors,

From the evening to the morning have we waited,

Should thy foot haply sound on the awful floors.

The floors untrodden of the sun's feet glimmer,

The star-unstricken pavements of the night;

Do the lights burn inside? the lights wax dimmer
On festal faces withering out of sight.

on restar races withering out of organ

The crowned heads lose the light on them; it may be

Dawn is at hand to smite the loud feast dumb;

To bind the torch-lit centuries till the day be,

The feasting kingdoms till thy kingdome come.

Shall it not come? deny they or dissemble,

Is it not even as lightning from on high

Now? and though many a soul close eyes, and tremble,

How should they tremble at all who love thee as I?

I am thine harp between thine hands, O mother!

All my strong chords are strained with love of thee.

We grapple in love and wrestle, as each with other

Wrestle the wind and the unreluctant sea.

I am no courtier of thee sober-suited, Who loves a little for a little pay

Me not thy winds and storms, nor thrones disrooted,

Nor molten crowns, nor thine own sins, dismay.

Sinned hast thou sometime, therefore art thou sinless;

Stained hast thou been, who art therefore without stain;

Even as man's soul is kin to thee, but kinless

Thou, in whose womb Time sows the all-various grain.

I do not bid thee spare me, O dreadful mother!

I pray thee that thou spare not, of thy grace.

How were it with me then, if ever another

Should come to stand before thee in this my place?

I am the trumpet at thy lips, thy clarion,

Full of thy cry, sonorous with thy breath;

The graves of souls born worms, and creeds grown carrion

Thy blast of judgment fills with fires of death.

Thou art the player whose organ-keys are thunders,

And I, beneath thy foot, the pedal prest;

Thou art the ray whereat the rent night sunders,

And I the cloudlet borne upon thy breast.

I shall burn up before thee, pass and perish,

As haze in sunrise on the red sealine;

But thou from dawn to sunsetting shalt cherish

The thoughts that led and souls that lighted mine.

Reared between night and noon and truth and error,

Each twilight-travelling bird that trills and screams

Sickens at midday, nor can face for terror

The imperious heaven's inevitable extremes.

I have no spirit of skill with equal fingers

At sign to sharpen or to slacken

strings;

I keep no time of song with goldperched singers

And chirp of linnets on the wrists of kings.

I am thy storm-thrush of the days that darken,

Thy petrel in the foam that bears thy bark

To port through night and tempest: if thou hearken,

My voice is in thy heaven before the

My voice is in thy heaven before the lark.

My song is in the mist that hides thy morning, My cry is up before the day for

thee,

I have heard thee and beheld thee and give warning,

Before thy wheels divide the sky and sea.

Birds shall wake with thee voiced and feathered fairer,

To see in summer what I see in spring:

I have eyes and heart to endure thee,
O thunder-bearer,

And they shall be who shall have tongues to sing.

I have love at least, and have not fear, and part not

From thine unnavigable and wingless

Thou tarriest, and I have not said thou art not.

Nor all thy night long have denied thy day.

Darkness to daylight shall lift up thy

Hill to hill thunder, vale cry back to

With wind-notes as of eagles Æschy-

And Sappho singing in the nightingale.

Sung to by mighty sons of dawn and daughters,

Of this night's songs thine ear shall keep but one, -

That supreme song which shook the channelled waters,

And called thee skyward as God calls the sun.

Come, though all heaven again be fire above thee;

Though death before thee come to clear thy sky;

Let us but see in his thy face who love

Yea, though thou slay us, arise, and let us die.

## SIENA.

INSIDE this northern summer's fold The fields are full of naked gold, Broadcast from heaven on lands it

The green veiled air is full of doves; Soft leaves that sift the sunbeams let Light on the small warm grasses wet Fall in short broken kisses sweet, And break again like waves that beat Round the sun's feet.

But I, for all this English mirth Of golden-shod and dancing days, And the old green-girt sweet-hearted earth.

Desire what here no spells can raise. Far hence, with holier heavens above, The lovely city of my love Bathes deep in the sun-satiate air That flows round no fair thing more fair.

Her beauty bare.

There the utter sky is holier, there More pure the intense white height of air,

More clear men's eyes that mine would meet.

And the sweet springs of things more

There, for this one warm note of doves A clamor of a thousand loves Storms the night's ear, the day's assails, From the tempestuous nightingales, And fills, and fails.

O gracious city well beloved! Italian, and a maiden crowned, Siena, my feet are no more moved Toward thy strange shapen moun-

tain-bound; But my heart in me turns and moves, O lady loveliest of my loves, Toward thee, to lie before thy feet, And gaze from thy fair fountain-seat Up the sheer street;

And the house midway hanging see That saw Saint Catherine bodily, Felt on its floors her sweet feet move, And the live light of fiery love Burn from her beautiful strange face, As in the sanguine sacred place Where in pure hands she took the head Severed, and with pure lips still red Kissed the lips dead.

For years through, sweetest of the saints,

In quiet without cease she wrought, Till cries of men and fierce complaints From outward moved her maiden thought;

And prayers she heard and sighs toward France, -

"God, send us back deliverance,

Send back thy servant, lest we die 1" With an exceeding bitter cry They smote the sky.

Then in her sacred saving hands She took the sorrows of the lands. With maiden palms she lifted up The sick time's blood-imbittered cup, And in her virgin garment furled The faint limbs of a wounded world. Clothed with calm love and clear desire. She went forth in her soul's attire. A missive fire.

Across the might of men that strove It shone, and over heads of kings; And molten in red flames of love

Were swords and many monstrous

And shields were lowered, and snapt were spears,

And sweeter tuned the clamorous years; And faith came back, and peace, that

Fled; for she bade, saying, "Thou, God's heir. Hast thou no care?

"Lo, men lay waste thine heritage Still, and much heathen people rage Against thee, and devise vain things. What comfort in the face of kings, What counsel is there? Turn thine eves

And thine heart from them in like wise; Turn thee unto thine holy place To help us that of God for grace Require thy face.

"For who shall hear us if not thou In a strange land? what doest thou

Thy sheep are spoiled, and the plough-

ers plough

Upon us: why hast thou no care For all this, and beyond strange hills Liest unregardful what snow chills Thy foldless flock, or what rains beat? Lo, in thine ears, before thy feet, Thy lost sheep bleat.

"And strange men feed on faultless lives.

And there is blood, and mer, put knives, Shepherd, unto the young lamb's throat; And one hath eaten, and one smote, And one had hunger and is fed Full of the flesh of these, and red With blood of these as who drinks

And God knoweth, who hath sent thee a sign,

If these were thine."

But the Pope's heart within him burned, So that he rose up, seeing the sign And came among them; but she turned Back to her daily way divine,

And fed her faith with silent things, And lived her life with curbed white wings,

And mixed herself with heaven, and died:

And now on the sheer city-side Smiles like a bride.

You see her in the fresh clear gloom, Where walls shut out the flame and bloom

Of full-breathed summer, and the roof Keeps the keen ardent air aloof And sweet weight of the violent sky: There bodily beheld on high, She-seems as one hearing in tune Heaven within heaven, at heaven's full

In sacred swoon, -

A solemn swoon of sense that aches With imminent blind heat of heaven, While all the wide-eyed spirit wakes, Vigilant of the supreme Seven, Whose choral flames in God's sight

Made unendurable with love, That without wind or blast of breath Compels all things, through life and death.

Whither God saith.

There on the dim side-chapel wall Thy mighty touch memorial, Razzi, raised up, for ages dead, And fixed for us her heavenly head; And, rent with plaited thorn and rod, Bared the live likeness of her God To men's eyes turning from strange lands,

Where, pale from thine immortal hands, Christ wounded stands;

And the blood blots his holy hair
And white brows over hungering eyes
That plead against us, and the fair

Mute lips forlorn of words or sighs In the great torment that bends down His bruised head with the bloomless crown,

White as the unfruitful thorn-flower,—A God beheld in dreams that were Beheld of her.

In vain on all these sins and years Falls the sad blood, fall the slow tears,—In vain poured forth as water-springs, Priests, on your altars, and ye, kings, About your seats of sanguine gold: Still your God, spat upon and sold, Bleeds at your hands; but now is gone All his flock from him saving one,—Judas alone.

Surely your race it was that he,
O men signed backward with his
name!

Beholding in Gethsemane,

Bled the red bitter sweat of shame, Knowing how the word of Christian should

Mean to men evil and not good, Seem to men shameful for your sake, Whose lips, for all the prayers they make,

Man's blood must slake.

But blood nor tears ye love not, you
That my love leads my longing to,
Fair as the world's old faith of flowers,
O golden goddesses of ours!
From what Idalian rose-pleasance
Hath Aphrodite bidden glance
The lovelier lightnings of your feet?
From what sweet Paphian sward or
seat

Led you more sweet?

O white three sisters, three as one. With flower-like arms for flowery bands,

Your linked limbs glitter like the sun, And time lies beaten at your hands. Time and wild years and wars and men Pass, and ye care not whence or when; With calm lips over-sweet for scorn, Ye watch night pass, O children born

Of the old-world morn!

Ah! in this strange and shrineless place, What doth a goddess, what a Grace, Where no Greek worships her shrined limbs

limbs
With wreaths and Cytherean hymns?
Where no lute makes luxurious
The adoring airs in Amathus,
Till the maid, knowing her mother near,
Sobs with love, aching with sweet fear?
What do ye here?

For the outer land is sad, and wears
A raiment of a flaming fire;
And the fierce fruitless mountain stairs
Climb, yet seem wroth and loath to

aspire, —
Climb, and break, and are broken down,

And through their clefts and crests the town

Looks west, and sees the dead sun lie, In sanguine death that stains the sky With angry dye.

And from the war-worn wastes without In twilight, in the time of doubt, One sound comes of one whisper, where Moved with low motions of slow air The great trees nigh the castle swing In the sad-colored evening: "Ricorditi di me, che son La Pia,"—that small sweet word alone Is not yet gone.

"Ricorditi di me,"—the sound
Sole out of deep dumb days remote,
Across the fiery and fatal ground

Comes tender as a hurt bird's note To where, a ghost with empty hands, A woe-worn ghost, her palace stands In the mid city, where the strong Bells turn the sunset air to song,

And the towers throng.

With other face, with speech the same, A mightier maiden's likeness came Late among mourning men that slept, A sacred ghost that went and wept, White as the passion-wounded Lamb, Saying, "Ah, remember me, that am Italia." (From deep sea to sea Earth heard, earth knew her, that this

was she.)
"Ricorditi.

Love made me of all things fairest thing,

And Hate unmade me; this knows

Who with God's sacerdotal ring
Enringed mine hand, espousing me."
Yea, in thy myriad-mooded woe,
Yea, Mother, hast thou not said so?
Have not our hearts within us stirred,
') thou most boliest, at thy word?
Have we not heard?

As this dead tragic land that she
Found deadly, such was time to thee;
Years passed thee withering in the red
Maremma, — years that deemed thee
dead,

Ages that sorrowed or that scorned; And all this while, though all they

mourned,
Thou sawest the end of things unclean,
And the unborn that should see thee a
queen.

Have we not seen?

The weary poet, thy sad son,
Upon thy soil, under thy skies,
Saw all Italian things save one,—

Italia: this thing missed his eyes;
The old mother-might, the breast, the face,

That reared, that lit the Roman race,—
This not Leopardi saw; but we,
What is it, Mother, that we see,—
What, if not thee?

Look thou from Siena southward home, Where the priest's pall hangs rent on Rome,

And through the red rent swaddling-

Toward thine she strains her labouring hands.

Look thou and listen, and let be All the dead quick, all the bond free; In the blind eyes let there be sight; In the eighteen centuries of the night Let there be light.

Bow down the beauty of thine head, Sweet, and with lips of living breath Kiss thy sons sleeping and thy dead, That there be no more sleep or

death.
Give us thy light, thy might, thy love,
Whom thy face seen afar above
Drew to thy feet: and when, being free,
Thou hast blest thy children born to

Bless also me, —

Me, that when others played or slept, Sat still under thy cross, and wept; Me, who so early and unaware Felt fall on bent bared brows and hair (Thin drops of the overflowing flood!) The bitter blessing of thy blood, The sacred shadow of thy pain, Thine, the true maiden-mother, slain And raised again;

Me, consecrated, if I might,
To praise thee, or to love at least,
O mother of all men's dear delight,
Thou madest a choral-souled boypriest,

Before my lips had leave to sing, Or my hands hardly strength to cling About the intolerable tree Whereto they had nailed my heart and

> thee, And said, "Let be."

For to thee too, the high Fates gave Grace to be sacrificed and save, That being arisen, in the equal sun, God and the People should be one; By those red roads thy footprints trod, Man more divine, more human God, Saviour; that where no light was known

But darkness, and a daytime flown, Light should be shown. Let there be light, O Italy!
For our feet falter in the night.
O lamp of living years to be,

O light of God, let there be light! Fill with a love keener than flame Men scaled in spirit with thy name, The cities and the Roman skies, Where men with other than man's eyes

Saw thy sun rise.

For theirs thou wast, and thine were they,

Whose names outshine thy very day:
For they are thine, and theirs thou art,
Whose blood beats living in man's
heart,

Remembering ages fled and dead Wherein for thy sake these men bled; They that saw Trebia, they that see Mentana, they in years to be

That shall see thee.

For thine are all of us, and ours
Thou; till the seasons bring to birth
A perfect people, and all the powers
Be with them that bear fruit on

earth:

Till the inner heart of man be one With freedom, and the sovereign sun; And Time, in likeness of a guide, Lead the Republic as a bride Up to God's side.

# COR CORDIUM.

O HEART of hearts, the chalice of love's fire,

Hid round with flowers and all the bounty of bloom;

O wonderful and perfect heart, for whom

The lyrist liberty made life a lyre;
O heavenly heart, at whose most dear
desire

Dead Love, living and singing, cleft his tomb,

And with him risen and regent in death's room

All day thy choral pulses rang full shoir;

O hearts whose beating blood was running song,

O sole thing sweeter than thine own songs were,

Help us for thy free love's sake to be free,

True for thy truth's sake, for thy strength's sake strong,

Till very liberty make clean and fair

The nursing earth as the sepulchral sea.

# TIRESIAS.

#### PART I.

It is an hour before the hour of dawn. Set in mine hand my staff, and leave me here

Outside the hollow house that blind men fear,

More blind than I who live on life withdrawn,

And feel on eyes that see not but foresee

The shadow of death which clothes Antigone.

Here lay her living body that here lies Dead, if man living know what thing is death,

If life be all made up of blood and breath,

And no sense be save as of ears and eyes.

But heart there is not, tongue there is not found,

To think or sing what verge hath life or bound.

In the beginning when the powers that made

The young child man a little loved him, seeing

His joy of life and fair face of his being,

And bland and laughing with the manchild played,

As friends they saw on our divine one day,

King Cadmus take to queen Harmo-

The strength of soul that builds up as with hands,

Walls spiritual and towers and towns of thought Which only fate, not force, can bring

to naught,

Took then to wife the light of all men's lands,

War's child, and love's, most sweet and wise and strong.

Order of things and rule and guiding song.

It was long since: yea, even the sun that saw

Remembers hardly what was, nor how long;

And now the wise heart of the worldly song

Is perished, and the holy hand of law Can set no tune on time, nor help again

The power of thought to build up life for men.

Yea, surely are they now transformed or dead,

And sleep below this world, where no sun warms,

Or move about it now in formless

Incognizable, and all their lordship fled; And where they stood up singing,

crawl and hiss With fangs that kill behind their lips

Yet though her marriage-garment, seeming fair,

that kiss.

Was dyed in sin and woven of jeal-

To turn their seed to poison, time shall see

The gods re-issue from them, and repair Their broken stamp of godhead, and

Thought and wise love sing words of law to men.

1, Tiresias the prophet, seeing in Thebes hands

Who sow with fruitless wheat the stones and sands, With fruitful thorns the fallows and

warm glebes, Bade their hands hold lest worse hap

come to pass, But which of you had heed of Tire

I am as Time's self in mine own wea-

sias?

ried mind. Whom the strong heavy-footed years have led

From night to night and dead mer unto dead,

And from the blind hope to the mem ory blind;

For each man's life is woven, as Time's life is,

Of blind young hopes and old blind memories.

I am a soul outside of death and birth. I see before me and afterward I see, O child, O corpse, the live dead face

of thee, Whose life and death are one thing

upon earth Where day kills night and night agair kills day And dies; but where is that Harmo

nia?

O all-beholden light not seen of me! Air, and warm winds that under the sun's eye

Stretch your strong wings at morn ing; and thou, sky,

Whose hollow circle engirdling earth and sea

All night the set stars limit, and al

The moving sun remeasures; ye I say, —

Ye heights of hills, and thou Dircear spring

Inviolable, and ye towers that sam cast down

Seven kings keen-sighted toward you seven-faced town,

Much evil, and the misery of men's And quenched the red seed of one sight less king;

And thou, for death less dreadful than for birth,

Whose wild leaves hide the horror of the earth, —

O mountain whereon gods made chase of kings,

Cithæon, thou that sawest on Pentheus dead

Fangs of a mother fasten, and wax red,

And satiate with a son thy swollen springs,

And heardst her cry fright all thine eyries' nests

Who gave death suck at sanguinesuckling breasts;

Yea, and a grief more grievous, without name.

A curse too grievous for the name of grief,

Thou sawest, and heardst the rumor scare belief

Even unto death and madness, when

Was lit whose ashes dropped about the pyre

That of two brethren made one sun; dering fire;

O bitter nurse, that on thine hard bare knees

Rear'dst for his fate the bloody-footed child

Whose hands should be more bloodily defiled

And the old blind feet walk wearier ways than these,

Whose seed, brought forth in darkness unto doom,

Should break as fire out of his mother's womb;

I bear you witness as ye bear to me, Time, day, night, sun, stars, life,

death, air, sea, earth, And ye that round the human house

of birth
Watch with veiled heads and weaponed hands, and see

Good things and evil, strengthless yet and dumb,

Sit in the clouds with cloudlike hours to come;

Ye forces without form and viewless powers

That have the keys of all our years in hold,

That prophesy too late with tongues of gold,

In a strange speech whose words are perished hours,

I witness to you what good things ye give

As ye to me what evil while I live.

What should I do to blame you, what to praise,

For floral hours and hours funereal?
What should I do to curse or bless
at all

For winter-woven or summer-colored days?

Curse he that will, and bless you whose can:

I have no common part in you with man.

I hear a springing water, whose quick sound

Makes softer the soft, sunless, patient

And the wind's hand is laid on my thin hair

Light as a lover's, and the grasses round Have odors in them of green bloom and rain,

Sweet as the kiss wherewith sleep kisses pain.

I hear the low sound of the spring of time

Still beating as the low live throb of blood,

And where its waters gather head and

I hear change moving on them, and the chime

Across them of reverberate wings of hours

Sounding, and feel the future air of flowers.

The wind of change is soft as snow, and sweet

The sense thereof as roses in the sun, The faint wind springing with the springs that run,

The dim sweet smell of flowering hopes, and heat

Of unbcholden sunrise; yet how long I know not, till the morning put forth song.

I prophesy of life, who live with death; Of joy, being sad; of sunlight, who am blind;

Of man, whose ways are alien from mankind

And his lips are not parted with man's breath:

I am a word out of the speechless years,

The tongue of time, that no man sleeps who hears.

I stand a shadow across the door of doom Athwart the lintel of death's house, and wait:

Nor quick nor dead, nor flexible by

Nor quite of earth nor wholly of the tomb;

A voice, a vision, light as fire or air, Driven between days that shall be and that were.

I prophesy, with feet upon a grave, Of death cast out, and life devouring death

As flame doth wood and stubble with a breath;

Of freedom, though all manhood were one slave;

Of truth, though all the world were liar; of love,

That time nor hate can raze the witness of.

Life that was given for love's sake and his law's,

Their powers have no more power on: they divide

Spoils wrung from lust or wrath of man or pride,

And keen oblivion without pity or pause

Sets them on fire, and scatters them

Like ashes shaken from a suppliant's hair.

But life they lay no hand on; life once given

No force of theirs hath competence to take:

Life that was given for some divine thing's sake,

To mix the bitterness of earth with heaven,

Light with man's night, and music with his breath,

Dies not, but makes its living food of death.

I have seen this, who live where men are not,

In the high starless air of fruitful

On that serenest and obscurest height Where dead and unborn things are one in thought,

And whence the live unconquerable springs

Feed full of force the torrents of new things.

I have seen this, who saw long since, being man,

As now I know not if indeed I be, The fair bare Lody of Wisdom, good

And evil, whence my light and night began:

Light on the goal and darkness on the

Light all through night and darkness all through day.

Mother, that by that Pegasean spring, Didst fold round in thine arms thy blinded son,

Weeping, "O holiest, what thing hast thou done,

What, to my child? woe's me that see the thing!

Is this thy love to me-ward, and hereof

Must I take sample how the gods can love?

"O child, thou hast seen indeed, poor child of mine,

The breasts and flanks of Pallas bare in sight,

But never shalt see more the dear sun's light;

O Helicon, how great a pay is thine For some poor antelopes and wilddeer dead!

My child's eyes hast thou taken in their stead"—

Mother, thou knewest not what she had to give,

Thy goddess, though then angered, for mine eyes;

Fame and foreknowledge, and to be most wise,

And centuries of high-thoughted life to live,

And in mine hand this guiding staff to be

As eyesight to the feet of men that see.

Perchance I shall not die at all, nor

The general door and lintel of men dead;

Yet even the very tongue of wisdom

What grace should come with death to Tiresias,

What special honor that god's hand accord

Who gathers all men's nations as their lord.

And sometimes when the secret eye of thought

Is changed with obscuration, and the sense

Aches with long pain of hollow prescience,

And fiery foresight with fore-suffering bought

Seems even to infect my spirit and consume,

Hunger and thirst come on me for the tomb.

I could be fain to drink my death, and sleep,

And no more wrapped about with bitter dreams

Talk with the stars and with the winds and streams

And with the inevitable years, and weep;
For how should he who communes
with the years

Be sometime not a living spring of tears?

O child, that guided of thine only will Didst set thy maiden foot against the gate

To strike it open ere thine hour of fate,

Antigone, men say not thou didst ill, For love's sake and the reverence of

his awe Divinely dying, slain by mortal law;

For love is awful as immortal death.

And through thee surely hath thy

brother won

Rest, out of sight of our world-weary sun,

And in the dead land where ye ghosts

draw breath
A royal place and honor; so wast

thou
Happy, though earth have hold of
thee too now

So hast thou life and name inviolable, And joy it may be, sacred and severe, Joy secret-souled beyond all hope or

A monumental joy wherein to dwell Secluse and silent, a selected state, Serene possession of thy proper fate.

Thou art not dead as these are dead who live

Full of blind years, a sorrow-shaken kind,

Nor as these are am I the prophet blind:

They have not life that have not heart to give

Life, nor have eyesight who lack heart to see

When to be not is better than to be.

O ye whom time but bears with for a span,

How long will ye be blind and dead,
how long

Make your own souls part of your own soul's wrong?

Son of the word of the most high gods, man,

Why wilt thou make thine hour of light and breath

Emptier of all but shame than very death?

Fool, wilt thou live for ever? though thou care

With all thine heart for life to keep it fast,

Shall not thine hand forego it at the last?

Lo, thy sure hour shall take thee by the hair

Sleeping, or when thou knowest not, or wouldst fly;

And as men died much mightier, shalt thou die.

Yea, they are dead, men much more worth than thou,

The savor of heroic lives that were, Is it not mixed into thy common air? The sense of them is shed about thee

Feel not thy brows a wind blowing from far?

Aches not thy forchead with a future star?

The light that thou may'st make out of thy name

Is in the wind of this same hour that drives,

Blown within reach but once of all men's lives;

And he that puts forth hand upon the flame

Shall have it for a garland on his head To sign him for a king among the dead.

But these men that the lessening years behold,

Who sit the most part without flame or crown,

And brawl and sleep, and wear their life-days down

With joys and griefs ignobler than o

And care not if the better day shal

Are these or art thou dead, Antigone

#### PART II.

As when one wakes out of a waning dream,

And sees with instant eyes the naked thought

Whereof the vision as a web wa wrought,

I saw beneath a heaven of cloud and gleam,

Ere yet the heart of the young sur

waxed brave,
One like a prophet standing by a
grave.

In the hoar heaven was hardly beam o breath,

And all the colored hills and field were gray,

And the wind wandered seeking for the day,

And wailed as though he had found he done to death,

And this gray hour had built to bur

her
The hollow twilight for a sepulchre.

But in my soul I saw as in a glass

A pale and living body full of grace There lying, and over it the prophet' face

Fixed; and the face was not of Tiresias For such a starry fire was in his eye As though their light it was that mad the skies.

Such eyes should God's have been whe very love

Looked forth of them and set the suraflame,

And such his lips that called the light

And bade the morning forth at sound thereof;

His face was sad and masterful as fate.

And like a star's his look compassionate.

Like a star's gazed on of sad eyes so long

It seems to yearn with pity, and all its fire

As a man's heart to tremble with desire

And heave as though the light would bring forth song;

Yet from his face flashed lightning on the land,

And like the thunder-bearer's was his hand.

The steepness of strange stairs had tired his feet,

And his lips yet seemed sick of that salt bread

Wherewith the lips of banishment are fed:

But nothing was there in the world so sweet

As the most bitter love, like God's own grace,

Wherewith he gazed on that fair buried face.

Grief and glad pride and passion and sharp shame,

Wrath and remembrance, faith and hope and hate,

And pitiless pity of days degenerate, Were in his eyes as an incorporate flame

That burned about her, and the heart thereof

And central flower was very fire of love.

But all about her grave wherein she slept

Were noises of the wild wind-footed years

Whose footprints flying were full of blood and tears,

Shrieks as of Mænads on their hills that leapt And yelled as beasts of ravin, and their meat

Was the rent flesh of their own sons to eat

And fiery shadows passing with strange cries,

And sphinx-like shapes about the ruined lands,

And the red reek of parricidal hands And intermixture of incestuous eyes,

And light as of that self-divided flame Which made an end of the Cadmean name.

And I beheld again, and lo the grave,

And the bright body laid therein as dead,

And the same shadow across another head

That bowed down silent on that sleeping slave

Who was the lady of empire from her birth

And light of all the kingdoms of the earth.

Within the compass of the watcher's hand

All strengths of other men and divers

Were held at ease and gathered up as flowers;

His heart was as the heart of his whole land,

And at his feet as natural servants lay

Twilight and dawn and night and laboring day

He was most awful of the sons of God.

Even now men seeing seemed at his
lips to see

The trumpet of the judgment that should be,

And in the breath that made the mountains bow

The horned fire of Moses on his brow.

The strong wind of the coming of the Lord

Had blown as flame upon him, and brought down

On his bare head from heaven fire for a crown,

And fire was girt upon him as a sword
To smite and lighten, and on what
ways he trod

There fell from him the shadow of a god.

Pale, with the whole world's judgment in his eyes,

He stood and saw the grief and shame endure

That he, though highest of angels, might not cure,

And the same sins done under the same skies.

And the same slaves to the same tyrants thrown,

And fain he would have slept, and fain been stone.

But with unslumbering eyes he watched the sleep

That sealed her sense whose eyes were suns of old;

And the night shut and opened, and behold,

The same grave where those prophets came to weep,

But she that lay therein had moved and stirred,

And where those twain had watched her stood a third.

The tripled rhyme that closed in Paradise

With Love's name sealing up its starry speech;

The tripled might of hand that found in reach

All crowns beheld far off of all men's eyes,

Song, color, carven wonders of live stone, —

These were not, but the very soul alone.

The living spirit, the good gift of grace,
The faith which takes of its own
blood to give

That the dead veins of buried hope may live,

Came on her sleeping, face to naked

face,
And from a soul more sweet than all

the south

Breathed love upon her sealed and breathless mouth.

Between her lips the breath was blown as fire,

And through her flushed veins leapt the liquid life,

And with sore passion and ambiguous strife

The new birth rent her and the new desire,

The will to live, the competence to be,

The sense to hearken, and the soul

And the third prophet standing by her grave

Stretched forth his hand, and touched her; and her eyes

Opened as sudden suns in heaven might rise,

And her soul caught from his the faith to save;
Faith above creeds faith beyond

Faith above creeds, faith beyond records, born

Of the pure, naked, fruitful, awful morn.

For in the daybreak now that night was dead

The light, the shadow, the delight, the pain,

The purpose and the passion of those twain,

Seemed gathered on that third prophetic head;

And all their crowns were as one crown, and one

His face with her face in the living sun.

For even with that communion of their eves

His whole soul passed into her, and made her strong;

And all the sounds and shows of shame and wrong,

The hand that slays, the lip that mocks and lies,

Temples and thrones that yet men seem to see, —

Are these dead, or art thou dead, Italy?

# AN APPEAL.

Τ.

ART thou indeed among these, Thou of the tyrannous crew, The kingdoms fed upon blood, O queen from of old of the seas, England,—art thou of them too That drink of the poisonous flood, That hide under poisonous trees?

TT

Nay, thy name from of old, Mother, was pure, or we dreamed; Purer we held thee than this, Purer fain would we hold; So goodly a glory it seemed, A fame so bounteous of bliss, So more precious than gold.

III.

A praise so sweet in our ears,
That thou in the tempest of things
As a rock for a refuge shouldst stand,
In the blood-red river of tears
Poured forth for the triumph of kings;
A safeguard, a sheltering land,
In the thunder and torrent of years.

IV.

Strangers came gladly to thee, Exiles, chosen of men, Safe for thy sake in thy shade, Sat down at thy feet and were free. So men spake of thee then:

Now shall their speaking be stayed?

Ah, so let it not be!

v.

Not for revenge or affright, Pride, or a tyrannous lust, Cast from thee the crown of thy praise. Mercy was thine in thy might; Strong when thou wert, thou wert just; Now, in the wrong-doing days, Cleave thou, thou at least, to the right.

VI.

How should one charge thee, how sway,
Save by the memories that were?
Not thy gold, nor the strength of thy

Nor the might of thine armies at bay, Made thee, mother, most fair; But a word from republican lips Said in thy name, in thy day.

VII.

Hast thou said it, and hast thou forgot? Is thy praise in thine ears as a scoff? Blood of men guiltless was shed, Children, and souls without spot, Shed, but in places far off:

Let slaughter no more be, said
Milton; and slaughter was not.

VIII.

Was it not said of thee too,
Now, but now, by thy foes,
By the slaves that had slain their
France,

And thee would slay as they slew — "Down with her walls that enclose Freemen that eye us askance, Fugitives, men that are true!"

IX.

This was thy praise or thy blame, From bondsman or freeman, — to be Pure from pollution of slaves, Clean of their sins, and thy name Bloodless, innocent, free:

Now if thou be not, thy waves

Wash not from off thee thy shame.

Freeman he is not, but slave, Whoso in fear for the state Cries for surety of blood, Help of gibbet and grave; Neither is any land great Whom, in her fear-stricken mood, These things only can save.

XI.

Lo! how fair from afar, Taintless of tyranny, stands Thy mighty daughter, for years Who trod the winepress of war, -Shines with immaculate hands; Slays not a foe, neither fears; Stains not peace with a scar.

XII.

Be not as tyrant or slave, England; be not as these, Thou that wert other than they. Stretch out thine hand, but to save; Put forth thy strength, and release: Lest there arise, if thou slay, Thy shame as a ghost from the grave. Nov. 20, 1867.

# PERINDE AC CADAVER.

In a vision Liberty stood By the childless charm-stricken bed Where, barren of glory and good, Knowing naught if she would not or would,

England slept with her dead.

Her face that the foam had whitened, Her hands that were strong to strive, Her eyes whence battle had lightened, Over all was a drawn shroud tightened To bind her asleep and alive.

She turned and laughed in her dream, With gray lips arid and cold: She saw not the face as a beam Burn on her, but only a gleam Through her sleep as of new-stamped gold.

But the goddess, with terrible tears In the light of her down-drawn eyes, Spake fire in the dull sealed ears:

"Thou, sick with slumbers and fears, Wilt thou sleep now indeed, or arise?

"With dreams, and with words, and with light

Memories and empty desires, Thou hast wrapped thyself round all night:

Thou hast shut up thine heart from the

And warmed thee at burnt-out fires.

"Yet once, if I smote at thy gate, Thy sons would sleep not, but heard: O thou that wast found so great, Art thou smitten with folly or fate,

That thy sons have forgotten my word?

"O Cromwell's mother, O breast That suckled Milton! thy name That was beautiful then, that was blest, Is it wholly discrowned and deprest, Trodden under by sloth into shame?

"Why wilt thou hate me and die? For none can hate me and live. What ill have I done to thee? why Wilt thou turn from me fighting, and

Who would follow thy feet and forgive?

"Thou hast seen me stricken, and said, What is it to me? I am strong:

Thou hast seen me bowed down on my dead,

And laughed, and lifted thine head, And washed thine hands of my wrong.

"Thou has put out the soul of thy

Thou hast sought to my foemen as friend,

To my traitors that kiss me and smite, To the kingdoms and empires of night

That begin with the darkness, and end.

"Turn thee, awaken, arise,
With the light that is risen on the
lands,

With the change of the fresh-colored skies:

Set thine eyes on mine eyes, Lay thy hands in my hands."

She moved and mourned as she heard, Sighed, and shifted her place, As the wells of her slumber were

Stirred

By the music and wind of the word,

Then turned, and covered her face.

"Ah!" she said in her sleep,
"Is my work not done with, and
done?

Is there corn for my sickle to reap? And strange is the pathway, and steep, And sharp overhead is the sun.

"I have done thee service enough, Loved thee enough in my day: Now nor hatred nor love Nor hardly remembrance thereof Lives in me to lighten my way.

"And is it not well with us here?
Is change as good as is rest?
What hope should move me, or fear
That eye should open or ear,
Who have long since won what is
best?

"Where among us are such thing?
As turn men's hearts into hell?
Have we not queens without stings,
Scotched princes, and fangless kings?
Yea," she said, "we are well.

"We have filed the teeth of the snake Monarchy: how should it bite? Should the slippery slow thing wake, It will not sting for my sake; Yea," she said, "I do right."

So spake she, drunken with dreams, Mad; but again in her ears A voice as of storm-swelled streams Spake: "No brave shame then redeems Thy lusts of sloth and thy fears? "Thy poor lie slain of thine hands,
Their starved limbs rot in thy sight;
As a shadow the ghost of thee stands
Among men living and lands,
And stirs not leftward or right.

"Freeman he is not, but slave,
Who stands not out on my side;
His own hand hollows his grave,
Nor strength is in me to save
Where strength is none to abide.

"Time shall tread on his name
That was written for honor of old,
Who hath taken in change for fame
Dust, and silver, and shame,
Ashes, and iron, and gold."

## THE OBLATION.

Ask nothing more of me, sweet:
All I can give you, I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet;
Love that should help you to live;
Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give,
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you sweet,
Think you and breathe you, and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
Give you but love of you, sweet:
He that hath more, let him give;
He that hath wings, let him soar;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.

# A SONG OF ITALY.

UPON a windy night of stars that fell
At the wind's spoken spell,
Swept with sharp strokes of agonizing
light

From the clear gulf of night, Between the fixed and fallen glories

Against my vision shone,

More fair and fearful and divine than they

That measure night and day,

And worthier worship; and within mine

The formless folded skies

Took shape and were unfolded like as flowers.

And I beheld the hours

As maidens, and the days as laboring men,

And the soft nights again

As wearied women to their own souls wed,

And ages as the dead.

And over these living, and them that died,

From one to the other side

A lordlier light than comes of earth or

Made the world's future fair.

A woman like to love in face, but not A thing of transient lot;

And like to hope, but having hold on truth;

And like to joy or youth,

Save that upon the rock her feet were set;

And like what men forget,

Faith, innocence, high thought, laborious peace, —

And yet like none of these,

Being not as these are mortal, but with

That sounded the deep skies,

And clove like wings or arrows their clear way

Through night and dawn and day, — So fair a presence over star and sun Stood, making these as one.

For in the shadow of her shape were all Darkened and held in thrall,

So mightier rose she past them; and I felt

Whose form, whose likeness knelt With covered hair and face, and clasped her knees;

And knew the first of these Was Freedom, and the second Italy And what sad words said she

For mine own grief I knew not, nor had heart

Therewith to bear my part

And set my songs to sorrow; nor to hear

How tear by sacred tear

Fell from her eyes as flowers or notes that fall

In some slain feaster's hall

Where in mid music and melodious breath

Men singing have seen death.

So fair, so lost, so sweet, she knelt; or

In our lost eyes below

Seemed to us sorrowing; and her speech being said,

Fell, as one who falls dead.

And for a little she too wept, who stood
Above the dust and blood

And thrones and troubles of the world then spake,

As who bids dead men wake: -

"Because the years were heavy on thy head;

Because dead things are dead; Because thy chosen on hillside, city and

plain Are shed as drops of rain;

Because all earth was black, all heaver was blind,

And we cast out of mind;

Because men wept, saying Freedom knowing of thee,

Child, that thou wast not free: Because wherever blood was not shame

was
Where the pure foot did pass:

Where thy pure foot did pass; Because on Promethean rocks distent

Thee fouler eagles rent;

Because a serpent stains with slime and foam

This that is not thy Rome;

Child of my womb, whose limbs were made in me,

Have I forgotten thee?

In all thy dreams through all these years on wing,

Hast thou dreamed such a thing?

The mortal mother-bird out-soars her nest,

The child outgrows the breast; But suns as stars shall fall from heaven

and cease, Ere we twain be as these; Yea, utmost skies forget their utmost For now the barren bosom shall bear

Ere we twain be not one.

My lesser jewels sewn on skirt and hem, I have no heed of them

Obscured and flawed by sloth or craft or power;

But thou, that wast my flower,

The blossom bound between my brows, and worn

In sight of even and morn

From the last ember of the flameless

To the dawn's baring breast -

I were not Freedom if thou wert not

Nor thou wert Italy.

O mystic rose ingrained with blood, impearled

With tears of all the world!

The torpor of their blind brute-ridden trance

Kills England and chills France; And Spain sobs hard through stran-

gling blood; and snows Hide the huge eastern woes.

But thou, twin-born with morning, nursed of noon,

And blessed of star and moon!

What shall avail to assail thee any more, From sacred shore to shore?

Have Time and Love not knelt down at thy feet,

Thy sore, thy soiled, thy sweet,

Fresh from the flints and mire of murderous ways

And dust of travelling days? Hath Time not kissed them, Love not

washed them fair, And wiped with tears and hair?

Though God forget thee, I will not forget;

Though heaven and earth be set Against thee, O unconquerable child, Abused, abased, reviled,

Lift thou not less from no funereal bed Thine undishonored head;

Love thou not less, by lips of thine once prest.

This my now barren breast;

Seek thou not less, being well assured thereof,

O child, my latest love.

fruit,

Songs leap from lips long mute, And with my milk the mouths of nations

Again be glad and red

That were worn white with hunger and sorrow and thirst;

And thou, most fair and first,

Thou whose warm hands and sweet live lips I feel

Upon me for a seal,

Thou whose least looks, whose smiles and little sighs,

Whose passionate pure eyes,

Whose dear fair limbs that neither bonds could bruise

Nor hate of men misuse,

Whose flower-like breath and bosom, O my child,

O mine and undefiled,

Fill with such tears as burn like bitter wine

These mother's eyes of mine,

Thrill with huge passions and primeval pains

The fulness of my veins.

O sweetest head seen higher than any stands. I touch thee with mine hands,

I lay my lips upon thee, O thou most

To lift thee on thy feet,

And with the fire of mine to fill thine

I say unto thee, Arise."

She ceased, and heaven was full of flame and sound.

And earth's old limbs unbound

Shone and waxed warm with fiery dew and seed

Shed through her at this her need:

And highest in heaven, a mother and full of grace,

With no more covered face,

With no more lifted hands and bended knees.

Rose, as from sacred seas

Love, when old time was full of plente ous springs,

That fairest-born of things,

The land that holds the rest in tender thrall

For love's sake in them all,

That binds with words and holds with eves and hands

All hearts in all men's lands.

So died the dream whence rose the live

That here takes form and fire, A spirit from the splendid grave of sleep

Risen, that ye should not weep, -Should not weep more nor ever, O ye

that hear, And ever have held her dear,

Seeing now indeed she weeps not who wept sore,

And sleeps not any more.

Hearken ye towards her, O people, exalt your eyes;

Is this a thing that dies?

Italia! by the passion of the pain That bent and rent thy chain;

Italia! by the breaking of the bands, The shaking of the lands;

Beloved, O men's mother, O men's

Arise, appear, be seen!

Arise, array thyself in manifold Queen's raiment of wrought gold;

With girdles of green freedom, and with red

Roses, and white snow shed

Above the flush and frondage of the hills That all thy deep dawn fills

And all thy clear night veils and warms

with wings

Spread till the morning sings;

The rose of resurrection, and the bright Breast lavish of the light,

The lady lily like the snowy sky Ere the stars wholly die;

As red as blood, and whiter than a

Flowers grown as from thy grave, From the green fruitful grass in Maytime hot,

Thy grave, where thou art not. Gather the grass and weave, in sacred

Of the ancient earth divine,

The holy heart of things, the seed of birth,

The mystical warm earth.

O thou her flower of flowers, with treble

Be thy sweet head arrayed,

In witness of her mighty motherhood Who bore thee and found thee

good, Her fairest-born of children, on whose

Her green and white and red Are hope and light and life, inviolate

Of any latter fate. Fly, O our flag, through deep Italian

Above the flags that were,

The dusty shreds of shameful battleflags

Trampled and rent in rags,

As withering woods in autumn's bitterest breath

Yellow, and black as death;

Black as crushed worms that sicken in the sense,

And yellow as pestilence.

Fly, green as summer and red as dawn and white

As the live heart of light,

The blind bright womb of color unborn, that brings

Forth all fair forms of things,

As freedom all fair forms of nations dyed In divers-colored pride.

Fly fleet as wind on every wind that

Between her seas and snows,

From Alpine white, from Tuscan green, and where

Vesuvius reddens air.

Fly! and let all men see it, and all kings

And priests wax faint and pale,

And the cold hordes that moan in misty places

And the funereal races

And the sick serfs of lands that wait and wane

See thee and hate thee in vain.

In the clear laughter of all winds and waves,

In the blown grass of graves,

In the long sound of fluctuant boughs of trees,

In the broad breath of seas,

Bid the sound of thy flying folds be heard;

And as a spoken word

Full of that fair god and that merciless Who rends the Pythoness,

So be the sound and so the fire that saith

She feels her ancient breath

And the old blood move in her immortal veins.

Strange travail and strong pains, Our mother, hast thou borne these many years

While thy pure blood and tears Mixed with the Tyrrhene and the Adrian

Light things were said of thee,

As of one buried deep among the dead; Yea, she hath been, they said,

She was when time was younger, and is

The very cerecloths rot

That flutter in the dusty wind of death, Not moving with her breath;

Far seasons and forgotten years enfold Her dead corpse old and cold

With many windy winters and pale springs:

She is none of this world's things. Though her dead head like a live garland wear

The golden-growing hair

That flows over her breast down to her

Dead queens, whose life was sweet In sight of all men living, have been found

So cold, so clad, so crowned,

With all things faded and with one thing fair,

Their old immortal hair,

When flesh and bone turned dust at touch of day:

And she is dead as they.

'So men said sadly, mocking; so the

Whose life was his soul's grave;

So, pale or red with change of fast and feast,

The sanguine-sandalled priest;

So the Austrian, when his fortune came to flood.

And the warm wave was blood; With wings that widened and with beak that smote,

So shrieked through either throat From the hot horror of its northern nest

That double-headed pest;

So, triple-crowned with fear and fraud and shame.

He of whom treason came,

The herdsman of the Gadarean swine; So all his ravening kine,

Made fat with poisonous pasture: so not we,

Mother, beholding thee.

Make answer, O the crown of all our slain.

Ye that were one, being twain,

Twain brethren, twin-born to the second birth,

Chosen out of all our earth

To be the prophesying stars that

How hard is night on day,

Stars in serene and sudden heaven rerisen

Before the sun break prison

And ere the moon be wasted; fair first flowers

In that red wreath of ours

Woven with the lives of all whose lives were shed

To crown their mother's head

With leaves of civic cypress and thick yew,

Till the olive bind it too,

Olive and laurel and all loftier leaves

That victory wears or weaves At her fair feet for her beloved brow;

Hear, for she too hears now,

O Pisacane, from Calabrian sands; O all heroic hands

Close on the sword-hilt, hands of all her dead;

O many a holy head,

Bowed for her sake even to her redden ing dust;

O chosen, O pure and just,

Who counted for a small thing life's estate.

And died, and made it great;

Ye whose names mix with all her memories; ye

Who rather chose to see

Death, than our more intolerable things; Thou whose name withers kings,

Agesilao; thou too, O chiefliest thou, The slayer of splendid brow,

Laid where the lying lips of fear deride The foiled tyrannicide,

Foiled, fallen, slain, scorned, and happy; being in fame,

Felice, like thy name,

Not like thy fortune; father of the fight, Having in hand our light.

Ah, happy! for that sudden-swerving hand

Flung light on all thy land,

Yea, lit blind France with compulsory

Driven down a righteous way;

Ah, happiest! for from thee the wars began,

From thee the fresh springs ran; From thee the lady land that queens the earth

Gat as she gave new birth.

O sweet mute mouths, O all fair dead of ours,

Fair in her eyes as flowers,

Fair without feature, vocal without

Strong without strength, rejoice! Hear it with ears that hear not, and on

That see not let it rise,

Rise as a sundawn; be it as dew that drips

On dumb and dusty lips;

Eyes have ye not, and see it; neither ears,

And there is none but hears.

This is the same for whom ye bled and wept;

She was not dead, but slept. This is that very Italy which was And is and shall not pass.

But thou, though all were not well done, O chief,

Must thou take shame or grief?

Because one man is not as thou or ten, Must thou take shame for men?

Because the supreme sunrise is not yet, Is the young dew not wet?

Wilt thou not yet abide a little while, Soul without fear or guile,

Mazzini, — O our prophet, O our priest, A little while at least?

A little hour of doubt and of control, Sustain thy sacred soul;

Withhold thine heart, our father, but an hour:

Is it not here, the flower,

Is it not blown and fragrant from the root,

And shall not be the fruit?

Thy children, even thy people thou hast made,

Thine, with thy words arrayed,

Clothed with thy thoughts and girt with thy desires, Yearn up toward thee as fires.

Art thou not father, O father, of all these?

From thine own Genoese

To where of nights the lower extreme lagune

Feels its Venetian moon,

Nor suckling's mouth nor mother's breast set free

But hath that grace through thee. The milk of life on death's unnatural

Thou gavest them to drink, The natural milk of freedom; and again They drank, and they were men.

The wine and honey of freedom and of

They drank, and cast off death.

Bear with them now; thou art holier. yet endure,

Till they as thou be pure.

Their swords at least that stemmed half Austria's tide

Bade all its bulk divide:

Else, though fate bade them for a breath's space fall,

She had not fallen at all.

Not by their hands they made time's promise true;

Not by their hands, but through. Nor on Custoza ran their blood to waste,

Nor fell their fame defaced

Whom stormiest Adria with tumultuous tides

Whirles undersea and hides.

Not his, who from the sudden-settling deck

Looked over death and wreck

To where the mother's bosom shone, who smiled

As he, so dying, her child;

For he smiled surely, dying, to mix his death

With her memorial breath;

Smiled, being most sure of her, that in no wise,

Die whoso will, she dies:

And she smiled surely, fair and far

Wept-not, but smiled for love.

Thou too, O splendour of the sudden sword

That drove the crews abhorred

From Naples and the siren-footed strand,

Flash from thy master's hand, Shine from the middle summer of the seas

To the old Æolides,

Outshine their fiery fumes of burning night,

Sword, with thy midday light;

Flame as a beacon from the Tyrrhene foam

To the rent heart of Rome,

From the island of her lover and thy lord,

Her savior and her sword.

In the fierce year of failure and of fame, Art thou not yet the same

That wast as lightning swifter than all wings

In the blind face of kings?

When priests took counsel to devise despair,

And princes to forswear,

She clasped thee, O her sword and flagbearer

And staff and shield to her,

O Garibaldi! need was hers and grief, Of thee and of the chief,

And of another girt in arms to stand As good of hope and hand,

As high of soul and happy, albeit indeed The heart should burn and bleed,

So but the spirit shake not nor the breast

Swerve, but abide its rest,

As theirs did and as thine, though ruin clomb

The highest wall of Rome,

Though treason stained and spilt her lustral water,

And slaves led slaves to slaughter,

And priests, praying and slaying, watched them pass

From a strange France, alas!

That was not freedom; yet when these were past

Thy sword and thou stood fast,

Till new men seeing thee where Sicilian waves

Hear now no sound of slaves,

And where thy sacred blood is fragrant

still

Upon the Bitter Hill,

Seeing by that blood one country saved and stained,

Less loved thee crowned than chained.
 And less now only than the chief: for he,

Father of Italy,

Upbore in holy hands the babe newborn

Through loss and sorrow and scorn, Of no man led, of many men reviled; Till, lo! the new-born child

Gone from between his hands, and in its place,

Lo, the fair mother's face.

Blessed is he of all men, being in one As father to her and son,

Blessed of all men living, that he found Her weak limbs bared and bound,

And in his arms and in his bosom bore.

And as a garment wore

Her weight of want, and as a royal

Put on her weariness.

As in faith's hoariest histories men read,

The strong man bore at need

Through roaring rapids when all heaven was wild

The likeness of a child

That still waxed greater and heavier as he trod,

And altered, and was God.

Praise him, O winds that move the molten air,

O light of days that were,

And light of days that shall be; land and sea,

And heaven and Italy:

Praise him, O storm and summer, shore and wave,

O skies and every grave;

O weeping hopes, O memories beyond tears,

O many and murmuring years,

O sounds far off in time and visions far,

O sorrow with thy star,

And joy with all thy beacons; ye that mourn,

And ye whose light is born;

O fallen faces, and O souls arisen, Praise him from tomb and prison,

Praise him from heaven and sunlight; and ye floods,

And windy waves of woods;

Ye valleys and wild vineyards, ye lit lakes

And happier hillside brakes,

Untrampled by the accursed feet that trod

Fields golden from their god, Fields of their god forsaken, whereof

none Sees his face in the sun,

Hears his voice from the floweriest wildernesses;

And, barren of his tresses,

Ye bays unplucked and laurels unintwined,

That no men break or bind,

And myrtles long forgetful of the sword,

And olives unadored,

Wisdom and love, white hands that save and slay,

Praise him; and ye as they,

Praise him, O gracious might of dews and rains

That feed the purple plains,

O sacred sunbeams bright as bare steel drawn,

O cloud and fire and dawn;

Red hills of flame, white Alps, green Apennines,

Banners of blowing pines,

Standards of stormy snows, flags of ligh leaves, Three wherewith Freedom weaves

One ensign that once woven and once unfurled

Makes day of all a world,

Makes blind their eyes who knew not and outbraves

The waste of iron waves;

Ye fields of yellow fulness, ye fresh fountains,

And mists or many mountains;

Ye moons and seasons, and ye day
and nights;
Ye storm headed heights

Ye starry-headed heights,

And gorges melting sunward from the snow,

And all strong streams that flow, Tender as tears, and fair as faith, and

pure

As hearts made sad and sure
At once by many sufferings and one love

O mystic deathless dove Held to the heart of earth and in he

hands

Cherished, O lily of lands,

White rose of time, dear dream of praises past, —

For such as these thou wast,

That art as eagles setting to the sun,

As fawns that leap and run,
As a sword carven with keen floral gold

Sword for an armed god's hold, Flower for a crowned god's forehead, -

O our land,

Reach forth thine holiest hand, O mother of many sons and memories,

Stretch out thine hand to his

That raised and gave thee life to rul and leap

When thou wast full of sleep, That touched and stung thee with youn

blood and breath
When they wast hard on death

When thou wast hard on death.

Praise him, O all her cities and he crowns,

Her towers and thrones of towns; O noblest Brescia, scarred from foot to

head And breast-deep in the dead,

Praise him from all the glories of the graves

That yellow Mela laves

With gentle and golden water, whose fair flood

Ran wider with thy blood:

Praise him, O born of that heroic breast, O nursed thereat and blest,

Verona, fairer than thy mother fair, But not more brave to bear:

Praise him, O Milan, whose imperial

Bruised once the German head;

Whose might, by northern swords left desolate,

Set foot on fear and fate:

Praise him, O long mute mouth of melodies,

Mantua, with louder keys,

With mightier chords of music even than rolled

From the large harps of old,

When thy sweet singer of golden throat and tongue,

Praising his tyrant, sung;

Though now thou sing not as of other days,

Learn late a better praise.

Not with the sick sweet lips of slaves that sing,

Praise thou no priest or king, No brow-bound laurel of discolored leaf, But him, the crownless chief.

Praise him, O star of sun-forgotten times,

Among their creeds and crimes
That wast a fire of witness in the night,

Padua, the wise men's light:
Praise him, O sacred Venice, and the

That now exults through thee,

Full of the mighty morning and the sun,

Free of things dead and done; Praise him from all the years of thy great grief,

That shook thee like a leaf

With winds and snows of torment, rain that fell

Red as the rains of hell,

Storms of black thunder and of yellow flame,

And all ill things but shame;

Praise him with all thy holy heart and strength;

Through thy walls' breadth and length

Praise him with all thy people, that their voice

Bid the strong soul rejoice,

The fair clear supreme spirit beyond stain,

Pure as the depth of pain,

High as the head of suffering, and secure

As all things that endure.

More than thy blind lord of an hundred years

Whose name our memory hears,

Home-bound from harbors of the Byzantine

Made tributary of thine,

Praise him who gave no gifts from oversea,

But gave thyself to thee.

O mother Genoa, through all years that

More than that other son,

Who first beyond the seals of sunset prest

Even to the unfooted west,

Whose back-blown flag scared from their sheltering seas

The unknown Atlantides,

And as flame climbs through cloud and vapor clomb

Through streams of storm and foam, Till half in sight they saw land heave and swim,—

More than this man praise him.

One found a world new-born from virgin sea;

And one found Italy.

O heavenliest Florence, from the mouths of flowers

Fed by melodious hours,

From each sweet mouth that kisses light and air,

Thou whom thy fate made fair,

As a bound vine or any flowering tree, Praise him who made thee free.

For no grape-gatherers trampling out

Tread thee, the fairest vine;

For no man binds thee, no man bruises, none

Does with thee as these have done. From where spring hears loud through

her long lit vales Triumphant nightingales. In many a fold of fiery foliage hid den,

Withheld as things forbidden,

But clamorous with innumerable delight

In May's red, green, and white, In the far-floated standard of the spring,

That bids men also sing,

Our flower of flags, our witness that we are free,

Our lamp for land and sea;

From where Majano feels through corn and vine,

Spring move and melt as wine,

And Fiesole's embracing arms enclose The immeasurable rose;

From hillsides plumed with pine, and heights wind-worn

That feel the refluent morn,

Or where the moon's face warm and passionate

Burns, and men's hearts grow great, And the swoln eyelids labor with sweet tears,

And in their burning ears

Sound throbs like flame, and in their eyes new light

Kindles the trembling night;

From faint illumined fields and starry valleys

Wherefrom the hill-wind sallies,

From Vallombrosa, from Valdarno raise One Tuscan tune of praise.

O lordly city of the field of death, Praise him with equal breath,

From sleeping streets and gardens, and the stream

That threads them as a dream

Threads without light the untravelled ways of sleep

With eyes that smile or weep;

From the sweet sombre beauty of wave and wall

That fades and does not fall: From colored domes and cloisters fair with fame,

Praise thou and thine his name.

Thou too, O little laurelled town of towers,

Clothed with the flame of flowers, From windy ramparts girdled with young gold,

From thy sweet hillside fold

Of wallflowers and the acacia's beltebloom

And every blowing plume,

Halls that saw Dante speaking, chapel fair

As the outer hills and air.

Praise him who feeds the fire that Dant fed.

Our highest heroic head,

Whose eyes behold through floate cloud and flame The maiden face of fame

Like April's in Valdelsa; fair as flowers And patient as the hours; Sad with slow sense of time, and brigh

with faith

That levels life and death:

The final fame, that with a foot sub lime

Treads down reluctant time:

The fame that waits and watches and i wise,

A virgin with chaste eyes,

A goddess who takes hands with grea men's grief;

Praise her, and him, our chief.

Praise him, O Siena, and thou her deep green spring,

O Fonte Branda, sing:

Shout from the red clefts of thy fier crags, Shake out thy flying flags

In the long wind that streams from hil to hill;

Bid thy full music fill

The desolate red waste of sunset air And fields the old time saw fair,

But now the hours ring void through ruined lands,

Wild work of mortal hands;

Yet through thy dead Maremma let his

Take flight and pass in flame, And the red ruin of disastrous hours

Shall quicken into flowers.

Praise him, O fiery child of sun and sea Naples, who hade thee be;

For till he sent the swords that scourge and save,

Thou wast not, but thy grave.

But more than all these praise him and

give thanks, Thou, from thy Tiber's banks,

From all thine hills and from thy supreme dome, —

Praise him, O risen Rome!

Let all thy children cities at thy knee
Lift up their voice with thee,

Saying, "For thy love's sake and our perished grief

We laud thee, O our chief!"

Saying, "For thine hand and help when hope was dead

We thank thee, O our head!"

Saying, "For thy voice and face within our sight

We bless thee, O our light;

For waters cleansing us from days defiled

We praise thee, O our child!"

So with an hundred cities' mouths in one

Praising thy supreme son,

Son of thy sorrow, O mother, O maid and mother,

Our 'queen, who serve none other, Our lady of pity and mercy, and full of grace,

Turn otherwhere thy face,

Turn for a little and look what things are these

Now fallen before thy knees;

Turn upon them thine eyes who hated thee,

Behold what things they be,

Italia: these are stubble that were steel,

Dust, or a turning wheel;

As leaves, as snow, as sand, that were so strong;

And howl, for all their song,

And wail, for all their wisdom; they that were

So great, they are all stript bare;
They are all made empty of beauty, and
all abhorred,

They are shivered, and 'heir sword; They are slain who slew, they are heartless who were wise,

Yea, turn on these thme eyes, O thou, soliciting with soul sublime

From broken swords of theirs,

Thou, with the sweet swoln eyelids that have bled

Tears for thy thousands dead,

And upon these, whose swords drank up like dew

The sons of thine they slew,

These, whose each gun blasted with murdering mouth

Live flowers of thy fair south,

These, whose least evil told in alien ears
Turned men's whole blood to tears,
These, whose least sin remembered for

pure shame

Turned all those tears to flame,
Even upon these, when breaks the extreme blow

And all the world cries woe,

When heaven reluctant rains long-suffering fire

On these and their desire,

When his wind shakes them and his waters whelm

Who rent thy robe and realm,

When they that poured thy dear blood forth as wine Pour forth their own for thine,

Pour forth their own for thine,

On these, on these have mercy; not in hate,

But full of sacred fate,

Strong from the shrine and splendid from the god,

Smite, with no second rod.

Because they spared not, do thou rather spare:

Be not one thing they were.

Let not one tongue of theirs who hate thee say

That thou wast even as they.

Because their hands were bloody, be thine white;

Show light where they shed night: Because they are foul, be thou the rather

pure;
Because they are feeble, endure;
Because they had no pity, have they pity

Because they had no pity, have thou pity.

And thou, O supreme city,
O priestless Rome that shalt be, take in
trust

Their names, their deeds, their dust, Who held life less than thou wert; be the least

To thee indeed a priest,

Priest and burnt-offering and bloodsacrifice

Given without prayer or price,

A holier immolation than men wist, A costlier eucharist,

A sacrament more saving; bend thine head

Above these many dead

Once, and salute with thine eternal eyes Their lowest head that lies.

Speak from thy lips of immemorial speech

If but one word for each.

Kiss but one kiss on each thy dead son's mouth

Fallen dumb or north or south;

And laying but once thine hand on brow and breast,

Bless them, through whom thou art blest.

And saying in ears of these thy dead "Well done,"

Shall they not hear, "O son?"

And bowing thy face to theirs made pale for thee,

Shall the shut eyes not see?

Yea, through the hollow-hearted world of death,

As light, as blood, as breath,

Shall there not flash and flow the fiery sense,

The pulse of prescience?

Shall not these know as in times overpast

Thee loftiest to the last?

For times and wars shall change, kingdoms and creeds,

And dreams of men, and deeds; Earth shall grow gray with all her golden

Pale peoples and hoar kings;

But though her thrones and towers of nations fall,

Death has no part in all;

In the air, nor in the imperishable sea, Nor heaven, nor truth, nor thee.

Yea, let all sceptre-stricken nations lie, But live thou though they die;

Let their flags fade as flowers that storm can mar,

But thine be like a star;

Let England's, if it float not for men free, Fall, and forget the sea; Let France's, if it shadow a hateful head,

Drop as a leaf drops dead;

Thine let what storm soever smite the rest
Smite as it seems him best;

Thine let the wind that can, by sea or

Wrest from thy banner-hand. Die they in whom dies freedom, die and

cease,

Though the world weep for these; Live thou, and love and lift when these lie dead

The green and white and red.

O our Republic that shalt bind in bands The kingdomless far lands,

And link the chainless ages; thou that wast

With England ere she past

Among the faded nations, and shalt be Again, when sea to sea

Calls through the wind and light of morning time,

And throneless clime to clime

Makes antiphonal answer; thou that art Where one man's perfect heart Burns, one man's brow is brightened for

thy sake,
Thine, strong to make or break:

Thine, strong to make or break; O fair Republic hallowing with stretched

hands The limitless free lands,

When all men's heads for love, not fear, bow down

To thy sole royal crown,

As thou to freedom; when man's life smells sweet,

And at thy bright swift feet

A bloodless and a bondless world is laid;

Then, when thy men are made,

Let these indeed as we in dreams behold

One chosen of all thy fold,

One of all fair things fairest, one exalt Above all fear or fault,

One unforgetful of unhappier men And us who loved her then;

With eyes that outlook suns and dream on graves;

With voice like quiring waves;

With heart the holier for their memories' sake

Who slept that she might wake;

With breast the sweeter for that sweet blood lost,

And all the milkless cost;

Lady of earth, whose large equality Bends but to her and thee;

Equal with heaven, and infinite of years, And splendid from quenched tears; Strong with old strength of great things

fallen and fled, Diviner for her dead:

Chaste of all stains and perfect from all scars,

Above all storms and stars,

All winds that blow through time, all waves that foam, -

Our Capitolian Rome.

# THALASSIUS.

UPON the flowery forefront of the

One wandering by the gray-green April

Found on a reach of shingle and shallower sand, Inlaid with starrier glimmering jewel-

Left for the sun's love and the light wind's cheer

Along the foam-flowered strand,

Breeze-brightened, something nearer sea than land

Though the last shoreward blossomfringe was near,

A babe asleep, with flower-soft face that gleamed

To sun and seaward as it laughed and dreamed,

Too sure of either love for either's

Albeit so birdlike slight and light, it seemed

Nor man, nor mortal child of man, but As even its twin-born tenderer spray-

flowers were,

hair.

For when July strewed fire on earth and sea

The last time ere that year,

Out of the flame of morn Cymothoë Beheld one brighter than the sun-bright

sphere Move toward her from its fieriest heart. whence trod

The live sun's very god,

Across the foam-bright water-ways that

As heavenlier heavens, with star for answering star;

And on her eyes and hair and maiden mouth

Felt a kiss falling fierier than the South, And heard above afar

A noise of songs and wind-enamoured wings,

And lutes and lyres of milder and mightier strings,

And round the resonant radiance of his

Where depth is one with height,

Light heard as music, music seen as

And with that second moondawn of the spring's

That fosters the first rose,

A sun-child whiter than the sunlit snows

Was born out of the world of sunless things

That round the round earth flows and ebbs and flows.

But he that found the sea-flower by the sea,

And took to foster like a graft of earth, Was born of man's most highest and heavenliest birth,

Free-born as winds and stars and waves are free:

A warrior gray with glories more than

Though more of years than change the quick to dead

Had rained their light and darkness on his head;

A singer that in time's and memory's

That the wind scatters like an Oread's | Should leave such words to sing as all his peers

Might praise with hallowing heat of rapturous tears,

Till all the days of human flight were fled.

And at his knees his fosterling was fed, Not with man's wine and bread,

Nor mortal mother-milk of hopes and fears,

But food of deep memorial days long sped;

For bread with wisdom, and with song for wine,

Clear as the full calm's emerald hyaline. And from his grave glad lips the boy would gather

Fine honey of song-notes, goldener than

gold, More sweet than bees make of the

breathing heather, That he, as glad and bold,

Might drink as they, and keep his spirit from cold.

And the boy loved his laurel-laden hair As his own father's risen on the eastern air.

And that less white brow-binding bay-

leaf bloom, More than all flowers his father's eyes

relume; And those high songs he heard,

More than all notes of any landward bird,

More than all sounds less free

Than the wind's quiring to the choral sea.

High things the high song taught him: how the breath,

Too frail for life, may be more strong than death;

And this poor flash of sense in life, that gleams

As a ghost's glory in dreams,

More stabile than the world's ownheart's root seems,

By that strong faith of lordliest love, which gives

To death's own sightless-seeming eyes a light

Clearer, to death's bare bones a verier might,

Than shines or strikes from any man that lives:

How he that loves life overmuch shall die

The dog's death, utterly;

And he that much less loves it than he hates

All wrong-doing that is done,

Anywhere always underneath the sun, Shall live a mightier life than time's or fate's.

One fairer thing he showed him, and in might

More strong than day and night,

Whose strengths build up time's towering period;

Yea, one thing stronger and more high than God,

Which, if man had not, then should God not be:

And that was Liberty.

And gladly should man die to gain, he said,

Freedom; and gladlier, having lost, lie dead.

For man's earth was not, nor the sweet sea-waves

His, nor his own land, nor its very graves,
Except they bred not, bore not, hid not

slaves: But all of all that is,

Were one man free in body and soul, were his.

And the song softened, even as heaven by night

Softens, from sunnier down to starrier light,

And with its moon-bright breath

Blessed life for death's sake, and for life's sake death;

Till as the moon's own beam and breath confuse,

In one clear hueless haze of glimmering hues,

The sea's line, and the land's line, and the sky's,

And light for love of darkness almost dies,

As darkness only lives for light's dear love,

Whose hands the robe of night is woven

of:

So in that heaven of wondrous words were life

And death brought out of strife; Yea, by that strong spell of serene increase,

Brought out of strife to peace.

And the song lightened, as the wind at morn

Flashes, and even with lightning of the wind

Night's thick-spun web is thinned,

And all its weft unwoven and overworn

Shrinks, as might love from scorn. And as when wind and light, on water

and land,

Leap as twin gods from heavenward hand in hand,

And with the sound and splendor of their leap

Strike darkness dead, and daunt the spirit of sleep,

And burn it up with fire;

So with the light that lightened from the lyre,

Was all the bright heat in the child's heart stirred,

And blown with blasts of music into flame,

Till even his sense became

Fire, as the sense that fires the singing bird,

Whose song calls night by name.

And in the soul within the sense began
The manlike passion of a godlike man,
And in the sense within the soul again
Thoughts that make men of gods, and
gods of men.

For love the high song taught him, — love that turns

God's heart toward man as man's to Godward; love

That life and death and life are fashioned of.

From the first breath that burns

Half-kindled on the flower-like yeanling's lip

So light and faint that life seems like to slip,

To that yet weaklier drawn

When sunset dies of night's devouring dawn:

But the man dying not wholly as all men dies

If aught be left of his in live men's eyes
Out of the dawnless dark of death to
rise:

If aught of deed or word

Be seen for all time, or of all time heard.

Love, that though body and soul were overthrown,

Should live for love's sake of itself alone,

Though spirit and flesh were one thing doomed and dead,

Not wholly annihilated.

Seeing even the hoariest ash-flake that the pyre

Drops, and forgets the thing was once afire,

And gave its heart to feed the pile's full flame

Till its own heart its own heat overcame,

Outlives its own life, though by scarce a span,

As such men dying outlive themselves

As such men dying outlive themselves in man,

Outlive themselves forever; if the heat Outburn the heart that kindled it, the sweet

Outlast the flower whose soul it was, and flit

Forth of the body of it

Into some new shape of a strange perfume

More potent than its light live spirit of bloom, -

How shall not something of that soul re-live,

That only soul that had such gifts to give

As lighten something even of all men's doom,

Even from the laboring womb,

Even to the seal set on the unopening tomb?

And these the loving light of song and love

Shall wrap and lap round, and impend above,

Imperishable; and all springs born il-

Their sleep with brighter thoughts than wake the dove

To music, when the hillside winds resume

The marriage-song of heather-flower and broom

And all the joy thereof.

And hate the song, too, taught him, — hate of all

That brings or holds in thrall

Of spirit or flesh, free-born ere God be-

The holy body and sacred soul of man.

And wheresoever a curse was, or a chain.

A throne for torment or a crown for

Rose, moulded out of poor men's molten

There, said he, should man's heaviest hate be set

Inexorably, to faint not or forget

Till the last warmth bled forth of the last vein

In flesh that none should call a king's again,

Seeing wolves and dogs and birds that plague-strike air

Leave the last bone of all the carrion bare.

And hope the high song taught him,

— hope whose eyes

Can sound the seas unsoundable, the skies

Inaccessible of eyesight; that can see What earth beholds not, hear what wind and sea

Hear not, and speak what all these crying in one

Can speak not to the sun.

For in her sovereign eyelight all things are

Clear as the closest seen and kindlier star

That marries morn and even and winter and spring

With one love's golden ring.

For she can see the days of man, the birth

Of good, and death of evil things on earth

Inevitable and infinite, and sure As present pain is, or herself is pure.

Yea, she can hear and see, beyond all things

That lighten from before Time's thunderous wings
Through the awful circle of wheel-

winged periods,
The tempest of the twilight of all

gods; And, higher than all the circling course

they ran,
The sundawn of the spirit that was

And fear the song, too, taught him, -

Worthless the dear love of the wind and sca

That bred him fearless, like a sea-mew reared

In rocks of man's foot feared,

Where naught of wingless life may sing or shine.

Fear to wax worthless of that heaven he had When all the life in all his limbs was

glad,
And all the drops in all his veins were

And all the pulses music; when his heart.

Singing, bade heaven and wind and sea bear part

In one live song's reiterance, and they

Fear to go crownless of the flower he

When the winds loved him, and the waters knew

The blithest life that clove their blithe

life through With living limbs exultant, or held

strife More amorous than all dalliance aye

With the bright breath and strength of. their large life, With all strong wrath of all sheer winds that blew,

All glories of all storms of the air that

Prone, ineluctable,

With roar from heaven of revel, and with hue

As of a heaven turned hell.

For when the red blast of their breath had made

All heaven aflush with light more dire

He felt it in his blood and eyes and

hair Burn as if all the fires of the earth and

Burn as it all the fires of the earth and

Had laid strong hold upon his flesh, and stung

The soul behind it as with serpent's tongue,

Forked like the loveliest lightnings:

But hardly, half distraught with strong delight,

The joy that like a garment wrapped him round,

And lapped him over and under With raiment of great light, And rapture of great sound

At every loud leap earthward of the thunder

From heaven's most furthest bound: So seemed all heaven in hearing and in

sight,
Alive and mad with glory and angry

That something of its marvellous mirth and might

Moved even to madness, fledged as even for flight,

The blood and spirit of one but mortal boy.

So, clothed with love, and fear that love makes great,

And armed with hope and hate,

He set first foot upon the spring-flowered ways

That all feet pass and praise.

And one dim dawn between the winter and spring,

In the sharp harsh wind harrying heaven and earth

To put back April that had borne his birth

From sunward on her sunniest showerstruck wing,

With tears and laughter for the dewdropt thing,

Slight as indeed a dewdrop, by the sea One met him lovelier than all men may be,

God-featured, with god's eyes; and in their might

Somewhat that drew men's own to mar their sight,

Even of all eyes drawn toward him; and his mouth

Was as the very rose of all men's youth, One rose of all the rose-beds in the world: But round his brows the curls were snakes that curled.

And like his tongue a serpent's; and his

Speaks death, and bids rejoice.

Yet then he spake no word, seeming as dumb,

A dumb thing mild and hurtless; nor at first

From his bowed eyes seemed any light to come, Nor his meek lips for blood or tears to

thirst:

But as one blind and mute in mild, sweet wise,

Pleading for pity of piteous lips and eyes,
He strayed with faint, bare, lily-lovely

feet,

Helpless, and flower-like sweet:
Nor might man see, not having word
hereof.

That this of all gods was the great god Love.

And seeing him lovely and like a little child

That well-nigh wept for wonder that it smiled,

And was so feeble and fearful, with soft speech

The youth bespake him softly; but

From the sweet lips no sweet word audibie

That ear or thought might reach;

No sound to make the dim cold silence glad.

No breath to thaw the hard harsh air with heat;

Only the saddest smile of all things

Only the sweetest smile of all things sad.

And so they went together one green

Till April dying made free the world for May;

And on his guide suddenly Love's face turned,

And in his blind eyes burned

Hard light and heat of laughter; and like flame

That opens in a mountain's ravening mouth

To blear and sear the sunlight from the south,

Ilis mute mouth opened, and his first word came:

"Knowest thou me now by name?"

And all his stature waxed immeasurable,

As of one shadowing heaven and lightening hell;

And statelier stood he than a tower that stands

And darkens with its darkness far-off sands

Whereon the sky leans red;

And with a voice that stilled the winds he said,—

"I am he that was thy lord before thy birth,

I am he that is thy lord till thou turn earth:

I make the night more dark, and all the morrow

Dark as the night whose darkness was my breath:

O fool, my name is Sorrow: Thou fool, my name is Death."

And he that heard spake not, and looked right on Again, and Love was gone.

Through many a night, toward many a wearier day,

His spirit bore his body down its way. Through many a day, toward many a wearier night,

His soul sustained his sorrows in her sight.

And earth was bitter, and heaven, and even the sea,

Sorrowful even as he.

And the wind helped not, and the sun was dumb;

And with too long strong stress of grief to be,

His heart grew sear and numb.

And one bright eve ere summer in autumn sank,

At star-dawn standing on a gray seabank

He felt the wind fitfully shift and heave

As toward a stormier eve; And all the wan wide sea shuddered;

and earth
Shook underfoot, as toward some timeless birth.

Intolerable and inevitable; and all Heaven, darkling, trembled like a

stricken thrall;
And far out of the quivering east, and

far
From past the moonrise and its guiding

star, Began a noise of tempest, and a light That was not of the lightning; and a

sound Rang with it round and round,

That was not of the thunder; and a flight

As of blown clouds by night,

That was not of them; and with songs and cries

That sang and shricked their soul out at the skies,

A shapeless earthly storm of shapes

A shapeless earthly storm of shapes began

From all ways round to move in on the

Clamorous against him silent; and their feet

Were as the winds are fleet,

And their shrill songs were as wild birds' are sweet. And as when all the world of earth was wronged,

And all the host of all men driven

By the red hand of Rome,

Round some fierce amphitheatre over thronged

With fair clear faces full of bloodier lust

Than swells and stings the tiger when his mood

Is fieriest after blood,

And drunk with trampling of the mur derous must

That soaks and stains the tortuous close-coiled wood

Made monstrous with its myriad-mustering brood,

Face by fair face panted and gleamed and pressed,

And breast by passionate breast

Heaved hot with ravenous rapture, as they quaffed

The red ripe full fume of the deep live draught,

The sharp quick reek of keen fresh bloodshed, blown

Through the dense deep drift up to the emperor's throne

From the under steaming sands,

With clamor of all-applausive throats and hands,

Mingling in mirthful time

With shrill, blithe mockeries of the lithe-limbed mime;

So from somewhence far forth of the unbeholden,

Dreadfully driven from over and after and under,

Fierce, blown through fifes of brazen blast and golden,

With sound of chiming waves that drown the thunder,
Or thunder, that strikes dumb the sea's

own chimes,
Began the bellowing of the bull-voiced

mimes, Terrible; firs bowed down as briers or

palms

Even at the breathless blast as of a

Fulfilled with clamor and clangor and storms of psalms;

Red hands rent up the roots of old world trees,

Thick flames of torches tossed as tumbling seas

Made mad the moonless and infuriate air

That, ravening, revelled in the riotous hair

And raiment of the furred Bassarides.

So came all those in on him; and his heart,

As out of sleep suddenly struck a-start, Danced, and his flesh took fire of theirs, and grief

Was as a last year's leaf

Blown dead far down the wind's way; and he set

His pale mouth to the brightest mouth it met

That laughed for love against his lips, and bade

Follow; and in following, all his blood grew glad

And as again a seabird's; for the wind Took him to bathe him deep round breast and brow;

Not as it takes a dead leaf drained and thinned,

But as the brightest bay-flower blown on bough,

Set springing toward it singing: and they rode

By many a vine-leafed, many a rosehung road,

Exalt with exaltation; many a night Set all its stars upon them as for spies On many a moon-bewildering mountain height

Where he rode only by the fierier light Of his dread lady's hot, sweet hungering eyes.

For the moon wandered witless of her way,

Spell-stricken by strong magic in such

As wizards use to set the stars astray.

And in his ears the music that makes mad

Beat always; and what way them usic bade,

That alway rode he; nor was any sleep His, nor from height nor deep.

But heaven was as red iron, slumberless,

And had no heart to bless;

And earth lay sear and darkling as distraught,

And help in her was naught.

Then many a midnight, many a morn and even,

His mother, passing forth of her fair heaven,

With goodlier gifts than all save gods can give

From earth or from the heaven where sea-things live,

With shine of sea-flowers through the bay-leaf braid

Woven for a crown her foam-white hands had made

To crown him with land's laurel and sea-dew,

Sought the sea-bird that was her boy:
but he

Sat panther-throned beside Erigone, Riding the red ways of the revel through

Midmost of pale-mouthed passion's

Till on some winter's dawn of some dim year

He let the vine-bit on the panther's lip Slide, and the green rein slip,

And set his eyes to seaward, nor gave ear

If sound from landward hailed him, dire or dear;

And passing forth of all those fair fierce ranks

Back to the gray sea banks,

Against a sea-rock lying, aslant the steep,

Fell after many sleepless dreams on sleep.

And in his sleep the dun green light was shed

Heavily round his head

That through the vale of sea falls fathom-deep,

Blurred like a lamp's that when the night drops dead

Dies; and his eyes gat grace of sleep

The deep divine dark day-shine of the sea,

Dense water-walls and clear dusk waterways,

Broad-based, or branching as a seaflower sprays

That side or this dividing; and anew
The glory of all her glories that he
knew.

And in sharp rapture of recovering tears

He woke on fire with yearnings of old years,

Pure as one purged of pain that passion bore,

Ill child of bitter mother; for his own Looked laughing toward him from her mid-sea throne,

Up toward him there ashore.

Thence in his heart the great same joy began,

Of child that made him man

And, turned again from all hearts else on quest,

He communed with his own heart, and had rest.

And like the sea-winds upon loud waters ran

His days and dreams together, till the

Burned in him of the boy;

Till the earth's great comfort and the sweet sea's breath

Breathed and blew life in where was heartless death, —
Death spirit-stricken of soul-sick days,

where strife
Of thought and flesh made mock of

death and life.

And grace returned upon him of his birth

Where heaven was mixed with heavenlike sea and earth;

And song shot forth strong wings that took the sun

From inward, fledged with might of sorrow and mirth,

And father's fire made mortal in his son. Nor was not spirit of strength in blast and breeze

To exalt again the sun's child and the

sea's:

For, as wild mares in Thessaly grow

With child of ravishing winds, that vio-

Their leaping length of limb with manes like fire,

And eyes outburning heaven's

With fires more violent than the lightning levin's,

And breath drained out and desperate of desire,

Even so the spirit in him, when winds grew strong,

Grew great with child of song.

Nor less than when his veins first leapt for joy

To draw delight in such as burns a boy, Now, too, the soul of all his senses felt The passionate pride of deep sea-pulses dealt

Through nerve and jubilant vein

As from the love and largess of old time;

And with his heart again

The tidal throb of all the tides keep rhyme,

And charm him from his own soul's separate sense

With infinite and invasive influence,
That made strength sweet in him, and
sweetness strong,

Being now no more a singer, but a song.

Till one clear day, when brighter seawind blew, And louder sea-shine lightened, for the

waves
Were full of godhead and the light that

saves, His father's and their spirit had pierced

him through,
He felt strange breath and light all

round him shed
That bowed him down with rapture;
and he knew

His father's hand, hallowing his humbled head,

And the old great voice of the old good time, that said:

"Child of my sunlight, and the sea, from birth A fosterling and fugitive on earth; Sleepless of soul as wind or wave or fire,

A man-child with an ungrown god's desire;

Because thou hast loved not mortal more than me,

Thy father, and thy mother-hearted

Because thou hast set thine heart to sing, and sold

Life and life's love for song, God's living gold;

Because thou hast given thy flower and fire of youth

To feed men's hearts with visions truer than truth;

Because thou hast kept in those worldwandering eyes

The light that makes me music of the skies;

Because thou hast heard, with world-unwearied ears,

The music that puts light into the spheres, —

Have therefore in thine heart and in thy mouth

The sound of song that mingles north and south,

The song of all the winds that sing of me,

And in thy soul the sense of all the sea."

# HERSE.

WHEN grace is given us ever to behold A child some sweet months old, Love, laying across our lips his finger,

saith, Smiling, with bated breath,

Hush! for the holiest thing that lives is here.

And heaven's own heart how near! How dare we, that may gaze not on the

Gaze on this verier one?

Heart, hold thy peace; eyes, be cast down for shame;

Lips, breathe not yet its name.

In heaven they know what name to call it: we,

How should we know? For, see!

The adorable sweet living marvellous

Strange light that lightens us

Who gaze, desertless of such glorious grace,

Full in a babe's warm face!

All roses that the morning rears are naught,

All stars not worth a thought,

Set this one star against them, or suppose

As rival this one rose.

What price could pay with earth's whole weight of gold

One least flushed roseleaf's fold

Of all this dimpling store of smiles that shine

From each warm curve and line, Each charm of flower-sweet flesh, to

re-illume

The dappled rose-red bloom

Of all its dainty body, honey-sweet Clenched hands and curled-up feet,

That on the roses of the dawn have trod

As they came down from God,

And keep the flush and colour that the sky

Takes when the sun comes nigh,

And keep the likeness of the smile their grace

Evoked on God's own face

When, seeing this work of his most heavenly mood,

He saw that it was good?

For all its warm sweet body seems one smile.

And mere men's love too vile

To meet it, or with eyes that worship

Read o'er the little limbs,

Read all the book of all their beauties o'er,

Rejoice, revere, adore,

Bow down and worship each delight in turn,

Laugh, wonder, yield, and yearn.
But when our trembling kisses dare.

But when our trembling kisses dare, yet dread,

Even to draw nigh its head,

And touch, and scarce with touch or breath surprise

Its mild miraculous eyes

Out of their viewless vision — O, what then,

What may be said of men?

What speech may name a new-born child? what word

Earth ever spake or heard?

The best men's tongue that ever glory knew

Called that a drop of dew

Which from the breathing creature's kindly womb

Came forth in blameless bloom.

We have no word, as had those men most high,

To call a baby by.

Rose, ruby, lily, pearl of stormless seas —

A better word than these,

A better sign it was than flower or gem

That love revealed to them:

They knew that whence comes light or quickening flame,

Thence only this thing came,

And only might be likened of our love To somewhat born above,

Not even to sweetest things dropped else on earth,

Only to dew's own birth.

Nor doubt we but their sense was heavenly true,

Babe, when we gaze on you,

A dew-drop out of heaven, whose colors are

More bright than sun or star,

As now, ere watching love dare fear or hope,

Lips, hands, and eyelids ope,

And all your life is mixed with earthly leaven.

O child, what news from heaven?

# EIGHT YEARS OLD.

I.

Sun, whom the faltering snow-cloud fears,

Rise, let the time of year be May, Speak now the word that April hears, Let March have all his royal way: Bid an spring raise in winter's ears
All tunes her children hear or play,
Because the crown of eight glad years
On one bright head is set to-day.

H

What matters cloud or sun to day

To him who wears the wreath of
years

So many, and all like flowers at play With wind and sunshine, while his

Hear only song on every way?

More sweet than spring triumphant
hears

Ring through the revel-rout of May Are these, the notes that winter fears.

#### TIT

Strong-hearted winter knows and fears
The music made of love at play,
Or haply loves the tune he hears

From hearts fulfilled with flowering

May,

Whose molten music thaws his ears Late frozen, deaf but yesterday To sounds of dying and dawning years, Now quickened on his deathward way.

#### IV.

For deathward now lies winter's way Down the green vestibule of years That each year brightens day by day With flower and shower till hope

scarce fears,

And fear grows wholly hope of May.
But we—the music in our ears
Made of love's pulses as they play,

The heart alone that makes it hears.

#### v.

The heart it is that plays and hears
High salutation of to-day.
Tongue falters, hand shrinks back, song

fears
Its own unworthiness to play

Fit music for those eight sweet years, Or sing their blithe accomplished

No song quite worth a young child's

Broke ever even from birds in May.

## VI.

There beats not in the heart of May, When summer hopes and springtide fears,

There falls not from the height of day, When sunlight speaks and silence

hears,

So sweet a psalm as children play And sing, each hour of all their years, Each moment of their lovely way, And know not how it thrills our ears.

VII.

Ah! child, what are we, that our ears
Should hear you singing on your
way,

Should have this happiness? The

years

Whose hurrying wings about us play Are not like yours, whose flower-time fears

Naught worse than sunlit showers in

May, Being sinless as the spring, that hears Her own heart praise her every day.

#### VIII.

Yet we, too, triumph in the day

That bare, to entrance our eyes and
ears.

To lighten daylight, and to play
Such notes as darkness knows and

The child whose face illumes our way, Whose voice lifts up the heart that

Whose hand is as the hand of May
To bring us flowers from eight full

FEB. 4, 1882.

# "NON DOLET"

IT does not hurt. She looked along the knife

Smiling, and watched the thick drops mix and run

Down the sheer blade: not that which had been done

Could hurt the sweet sense of the Roman wife, But that which was to do yet ere the strife

Could end for each forever, and the sun:

Nor was the palm yet nor was peace yet won

While pain had power upon her husband's life.

It does not hurt, Italia. Thou art more Than bride to bridegroom: how shalt thou not take

The gift love's blood has reddened

for thy sake?

Was not thy life-blood given for us before?

And if love's heart-blood can avail thy need,

And thou not die, how should it hurt indeed?

# LINES ON THE DEATH OF EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY.

LAST high star of the years whose thunder

Still men's listening remembrance hears,

Last light left of our fathers' years, Watched with honour and hailed with wonder.

Thee too, then, have the years borne under,

Thou too, then, hast regained thy peers.

Wings that warred with the winds of morning,

Storm-winds rocking the red great dawn,

Close at last, and a film is drawn

Over the eyes of the storm-bird, scorning

Now no longer the loud wind's warning,

Waves that threaten or waves that fawn.

Peers were none of thee left us living, Peers of theirs we shall see no more. Eight years over the full fourscore Knew thee: now shalt thou sleep, for giving

All griefs past of the wild world's giving,

Moored at last on the stormless shore.

World-wide liberty's lifelong lover, Lover no less of the strength of

Sea-king, swordsman, hater of wrong Over thy dust that the dust shall cover Comes my song as a bird to hover,

Borne of its will as of wings along.

Cherished of thee were this brief song's brothers

Now that follows them, cherishing thee.

Over the tides and the tideless sea, Soft as a smile of the earth our mother's,

Flies it faster than all those others,
First of the troop at thy tomb to
be.

Memories of Greece, and the mountain's hollow

Guarded alone of thy loyal sword, Hold thy name for our hearts in

Yet more fain are our hearts to follow

One way now with the southward swallow

Back to the grave of the man their lord.

Heart of hearts, art thou moved not, hearing

Surely, if hearts of the dead may hear,

Whose true heart it is now draws near?

Surely the sense of it thrills thee, cheering

Darkness and death with the news now nearing, —

Shelley, Trelawny rejoins thee here.

# OFF SHORE.

When the might of the summer
Is most on the sea;
When the days overcome her
With joy but to be,

With rapture of royal enchantment, and sorcery that sets her not free, —

But for hours upon hours
As a thrall she remains
Spell-bound as with flowers,
And content in their chains,
And her loud steeds fret not, and lift not
a lock of their deep white manes;

Then only, far under
In the depths of her hold,
Some gleam of its wonder
Man's eye may behold,
Its wild weed forests of crimson and
russet and olive and gold.

Still deeper and dimmer
And goodlier they glow
For the eyes of the swimmer
Who scans them below

As he crosses the zone of their flowerage that knows not of sunshine and snow.

Soft blossomless frondage
And foliage that gleams
As to prisoners in bondage
The light of their dreams,
The desire of a dawn unbeholden, with
hope on the wings of its beams.

Waxen haggard and wizen,
But consoled and illumed
In the depths of their prison
With delight of the light everlasting,
and vision of dawn on them

Not as prisoners entombed,

Vith delight of the light everlasting, and vision of dawn on them risen,—

From the banks and the beds

Of the waters divine,
They lift up their heads,
And the flowers of them shine
Through the splendor of darkness that
clothes them, of water that glimmers like wine.

Bright bank over bank
Making glorious the gloom,
Soft rank upon rank,
Strange bloom after bloom,
They kindle the liquid low twilight, the
dusk of the dim sea's womb.

Through the subtile and tangible Gloom without form, Their branches, infrangible Even of storm,

Spread softer their sprays than the shoots of the woodland when April is warm.

As the flight of the thunder, full
Charged with its word,
Dividing the wonderful
Depths like a bird,

Speaks wrath and delight to the heart of the night that exults to have heard,—

So swiftly, though soundless
In silence's ear,
Light, winged from the boundless
Blue depths full of cheer,
Speaks joy to the heart of the waters
that part not before him, but hear.

Light perfect and visible, Godhead of God, God indivisible,

Lifts but his rod,
And the shadows are scattered in sunder, and darkness is light at his

At the touch of his wand,
At the nod of his head
From the spaces beyond
Where the dawn hath her bed,

Earth, water, and air are transfigured, and rise as one risen from the dead.

He puts forth his hand,
And the mountains are thrilled
To the heart, as they stand
In his presence, fulfilled

With his glory that utters his grace upon earth, and her sorrows are stilled. The moan of her travail That groans for the light Till dayspring unravel The weft of the night,

At the sound of the strings of the music of morning, falls dumb with delight.

He gives forth his word, And the word that he saith, Ere well it be heard, Strikes darkness to death; For the thought of his heart is the sunrise, and dawn as the sound of his breath.

And the strength of its pulses, That passion makes proud, Confounds and convulses The depths of the cloud Of the darkness that heaven was ingirt with, divided and rent as a shroud, -

As the veil of the shrine Of the temple of old, When darkness divine Over noonday was rolled; So the heart of the night by the pulse of the light is convulsed and controlled.

And the sea's heart, groaning For glories withdrawn, And the waves' mouths, moaning All night for the dawn, Are uplift as the hearts and the mouths of the singers on lea-side and lawn.

And the sound of the quiring Of all these as one, Desired and desiring Till dawn's will be done, Fills full with delight of them heaven till it burns as the heart of the

Till the waves, too, inherit, And waters take part In the sense of the spirit That breathes from his heart, And are kindled with music, as fire when Of the snow-soft swarm of serene wings the lips of the morning part, -

In the light of her lips, In the life-giving word Of the dewfall that drips On the grasses of earth, and the wind

With music unheard

that enkindles the wings of the ships. White glories of wings

As of seafaring birds, That flock from the springs Of the sunrise in herds, With the wind for a heidsman, and hasten or halt at the change of his words;

As the watchwords change, When the wind's note shifts, And the skies grow strange, And the white squall drifts Up sharp from the sea-line, vexing the sea till the low cloud lifts.

At the charge of his word Bidding pause, bidding haste, When the ranks are stirred And the lines displaced, They scatter as wild swans, parting adrift on the wan green waste.

At the hush of his word, In a pause of his breath When the waters have heard His will that he saith, They stand as a flock penned close in its fold for division of death.

Of death to be thinned, As the shades in a vision Of spirits that sinned; So glimmer their shrouds and their sheetings as clouds on the stream of the wind.

As a flock by division

But the sun stands fast, And the sea burns bright, And the flight of them past Is no more than the flight poised and afloat in the light. Like flowers upon flowers, In a festival way,

When hours after hours Shed grace on the day,

White blossom-like butterflies hover and gleam through the snows of the spray.

Like snow-colored petals Of blossoms that flee From storm that unsettles

The flowers as the tree. They flutter, a legion of flowers on the wing, through the field of the sea.

Through the furrowless field Where the foam-blossoms blow, And the secrets are sealed Of their harvest below.

They float in the path of the sunbeams, as flakes or as blossoms of snow.

Till the sea's ways darken, And the god, withdrawn, Give ear not, or hearken

If prayer on him fawn, And the sun's self seem but a shadow, the noon as a ghost of the dawn.

No shadow, but rather, God, father of song, Shew grace to me, Father

God, loved of me long, That I lose not the light of thy face, that my trust in thee work me not wrong, -

While yet I make forward With face toward thee, Not turned yet in shoreward, Be thine upon me;

Be thy light on my forehead, or ever I turn it again from the sea.

As a kiss on my brow Be the light of thy grace, Be thy glance on me now From the pride of thy place: As the sign of a sire to a son, be the light on my face of thy face.

Thou wast father of olden Times hailed and adored. And the sense of thy golden Great harp's monochord

Was the joy in the soul of the singers that hailed thee for master and lord.

Fair father of all In thy ways that have trod, That have risen at thy call,

That have thrilled at thy nod, Arise, shine, lighten upon me, O sun that we see to be God.

As my soul has been dutiful Only to thee,

O God! most beautiful. Lighten thou me,

As I swim through the dim long rollers, with eyelids uplift from the sea.

Be praised and adored of us, All in accord.

Father and lord of us Always adored,

The slaver, and the stayer, and the harper, the light of us all, and our lord.

At the sound of thy lyre, At the touch of thy rod, Air quickens to fire By the foot of thee trod,

The savior, and healer, and singer, the living and visible God.

The years are before thee As shadows of thee, As men that adore thee,

As cloudlets that flee: But thou art the God, and thy kingdom is heaven, and thy shrine is the sea.

# EVENING ON THE BROADS.

Over two shadowless waters, adrift as a pinnace in peril,

Hangs as in heavy suspense, charged

with irresolute light, Softly the soul of the sunset upholden

awhile on the sterile Waves and wastes of the land, half

repossessed by the night.

Inland glimmer the shallows asleep, and afar in the breathless

Twilight: yonder the depths darken

afar and asleep.

Slowly the semblance of death out of heaven descends on the death-

Waters: hardly the light lives on the face of the deep, -

Hardly, but here for a while. over the gray soft shallow

Hover the colors and clouds of the twilight, void of a star.

As a bird unfledged is the broad-winged night, whose winglets are cal-

Yet, but soon with their plumes will she cover her brood from afar, -

Cover the brood of her worlds that cumber the skies with their blossom, Thick as the darkness of leaf-shad-

owed spring is encumbered with flowers.

World upon world is enwound in the bountiful girth of her bosom, Warm and lustrous with life lovely

to lock on as ours.

Still is the sunset adrift as a spirit in doubt that dissembles

Still with itself, being sick of division, and dimmed by dismay -

Nay, not so; but with love and delight beyond passion it trembles, Fearful and fain of the night, lovely

with love of the day:

Fain and fearful of rest that is like unto death, and begotten

Out of the womb of the tomb, born of the seed of the grave: Lovely with shadows of loves that are

only not wholly forgotten, Only not wholly suppressed by the

dark, as a wreck by the wave. Still there linger the loves of the morning and noon, in a vision

Blindly beheld, but in vain; ghosts that are tired, and would rest.

But the glories beloved of the night rise all too dense for division, Deep in the depth of her breast shel-

tered as doves in a nest.

Fainter the beams of the loves of the daylight season enkindled

Wane, and the memories of hours that were fair with the love of them fade;

Loftier, aloft of the lights of the sunse stricken and dwindled,

Gather the signs of the love at the heart of the night new-made. New-made night, new-born of the sun

set, immeasurable, endless, Opens the secret of love hid from o

old in her heart, —

In the deep sweet heart full-charged with faultless love of the friend

Spirits of men that are eased when the wheels of the sun depart.

Still is the sunset affoat as a ship or the waters upholden

Full-sailed, wide-winged, poised softl forever a-sway — Nay, not so, but at least for a little

a while at the golden

Limit of arching air fain for an hor to delay.

Here on the bar of the sand-bank steep yet aslope to the gleamin Waste of the water without, wast of the water within,

Lights overhead and lights underneat seen doubtfully dreaming

Whether the day be done, whether the night may begin.

Far and afar and farther again, the falter and hover,

Warm on the water, and deep in th sky, and pale on the cloud: Colder again, and slowly remoter, afrai

to recover

Breath, yet fain to revive, as it seems from the skirt of the shroud.

Faintly the heart-beats shorten an pause of the light in the wes ward

Heaven, as eastward quicken th paces of star upon star

Hurried and eager of life as a chil that strains to the breast-ward

Eagerly, yearning forth of the deep where the ways of them are,

Glad of the glory of the gift of the life and the wealth of its wonde

Fain of the night, and the sea, an the sweet wan face of the eartr Over them air grows deeper, intense with delight in them: under

Things are thrilled in their sleep, as with sense of a sure new birth.

But here by the sand-bank watching, with eyes on the sea-line, stranger Grows to me also the weight of the

sea-ridge gazed on of me,

Heavily heaped up, changefully changeless, void though of danger,

Void not of menace, but full of the might of the dense dull sea.

Like as the wave is before me, behind

is the bank deep-drifted;

Yellow and thick as the bank is behind me, in front is the wave.

As the wall of a prison imprisoning the mere, is the girth of it lifted;

But the rampire of water in front is

But the rampire of water in front is erect as the wall of a grave.

And the crests of it crumble and topple and change, but the wall is not broken:

broken: Standing still dry-shod, I see it as

higher than my head,
Moving inland alway again, reared up
as in token

Still of impending wrath still in the foam of it shed.

And even in the pauses between them, dividing the rollers in sunder,

High overhead seems ever the sealine fixed as a mark;

And the shore where I stand, as a valley beholden of hills whence thunder

Cloud and torrent and storm, darkening the depths of the dark.

Up to the sea, not upon it or over it, upward from under

Seems he to gaze, whose eyes yearn after it here from the shore;

A wall of turbid water, a-slope to the wide sky's wonder

Of color and cloud, it climbs, or spreads as a slanted floor.

And the large lights change on the face of the mere, like things that were living,

Winged and wonderful, beams like as birds are that pass and are free; But the light is dense as darkness, a

gift withheld in the giving,

That lies as dead on the fierce dull face of the landward sea.

Stained and stifled and soiled, made earthlier than earth is and duller, Grimly she puts back light as rejected, a thing put away:

No transparent rapture, a molten music of color;

No translucent love taken and given of the day.

Fettered and marred and begrimed, is the light's live self on her falling,

As the light of a man's life lighted the fume of a dungeon mars:

Only she knows of the wind, when her wrath gives ear to him calling,

The delight of the light she knows not, nor answers the sun or the stars.

Love she hath none to return for the luminous love of their giving:

None to reflect from the bitter and shallow response of her heart.

Yearly she feeds on her dead, yet herself seems dead and not living,

Or confused as a soul heavy-laden with trouble that will not depart. In the sound of her speech to the dark-

ness the moan of her evil remorse is,

Haply, for strong ships gnawed by

the dog-toothed sea-bank's fang, And trampled to death by the rage of

the feet of her foam-lipped horses, Whose manes are yellow as plague, and as ensigns of pestilence hang,

That wave in the foul faint air of the breath of a death-stricken city;

So menacing heaves she the manes of her rollers knotted with sand,

Discolored, opaque, suspended in sign as of strength without pity,

That shake with flameless thunder the low long length of the strand. Here, far off in the farther extreme of

the shore as it lengthens Northward, lonely for miles, ere ever

a village begin,

On the lapsing land that recedes as the growth of the strong sea strengthens

Shoreward, thrusting further and fur ther its outworks in, Here in Shakespeare's vision, a flower of her kin forsaken,

Lay in her golden raiment alone on the wild wave's edge,

Surely by no shore else, but here on the bank storm-shaken,

Perdita, bright as a dewdrop engilt of the sun on the sedge.

Here on a shore unbeheld of his eyes, in a dream, he beheld her

Outcast, fair as a fairy, the child of a far-off king;

And over the babe-flower gently the head of a pastoral elder

Bowed, compassionate, hoar as the hawthorn-blossom in spring,

And kind as harvest in autumn: a shelter of shade on the lonely

Shelterless unknown shore, scourged of implacable waves:

Here, where the wind walks royal, alone in his kingdom, and only Sounds to the sedges a wail as of

triumph that conquers and craves.

All these waters and wastes are his empire of old, and awaken

From barren and stagnant slumber at only the sound of his breath:

Yet the hunger is eased not that aches in his heart, nor the goal overtaken

That his wide wings yearn for, and labor as hearts that yearn after death.

All the solitude sighs and expects with a blind expectation

Somewhat unknown of its own sad heart, grown heart-sick of strife:

Till sometime its wild heart maddens, and moans, and the vast ululation

Takes wing with the clouds on the waters, and wails to be quit of its life.

For the spirit and soul of the waste is the wind, and his wings with their waving

Darken and lighten the darkness and light of it thickened or thinned,

But the heart that impels them is even as a conqueror's insatiably craving That victory can fill not, as power can not satiate the want of the wind

All these moorlands and marshes are full of his might, and oppose no Aught of defence nor of barrier, o

forest or precipice piled;

But the will of the wind works ever a his that desires what he knownot, And the wail of his want unfulfilled i

as one making moan for her child And the cry of his triumph is even a

the crying of hunger that mad

The heart of a strong man, aching in vain as the wind's heart aches; And the sadness itself of the land for

its infinite solitude saddens

More for the sound than the silence

athirst for the sound that slakes
And the sunset at last, and the twiligh

are dead; and the darkness is breathless With fear of the wind's breath ris

ing that seems and seems not to sleep; But a sense of the sound of it alway, a

spirit unsleeping and deathless, Ghost or god, evermore moves or

the face of the deep.

# THE EMPEROR'S PROGRESS.

A STUDY IN THREE STAGES.

(On the Busts of Nero in the Uffizj.)

A CHILD of brighter than the morning's

And lovelier than all smiles that may be smiled

Save only of little children undefiled Sweet, perfect, witless of their own dear worth,

Live rose of love, mute melody of mirth,

Glad as a bird is when the woods are

Adorable as is nothing save a child, Hails with wide eyes and lips his life on earth, His lovely life with all its keaven to be.

And whoso reads the name inscribed,
or hears.

Feels his own heart a frozen well of

Child, for deep dread and fearful pity of thee

Whom God would not let rather die

The incumbent horror of impending years.

## II.

Man, that wast godlike being a child, and now,

No less than kinglike, art no more in sooth

Sooti

For all thy grace and lordliness of youth,

The crown that bids men's branded foreheads bow,

Much more has branded and bowed down thy brow,

And gnawn upon it as with fire or tooth

Of steel or snake so sorely, that the truth

Seems here to bear false witness. Is it

Child? and is all the summer of all thy spring

This? are the smiles that drew men's kisses down

All faded and transfigured to the frown

That grieves thy face? Art thou this weary thing?

Then is no slave's load heavier than

a crown,

And such a thrall no bondman as a king.

## III.

Misery beyond all men's most miserable,

Absolute, whole, defiant of defence, Inevitable, inexplacable, intense, More vast than heaven is high, more

deep than hell,

Past cure or charm of solace or of spell,

Possesses and pervades the spirit and sense

Whereto the expanse of the earth pays tribute; whence

Breeds evil only, and broods on fumes that swell

Rank from the blood of brother and mother and wife.

"Misery of miseries, all is misery," saith

The heavy fair-faced hateful head, at strife With its own lusts that burn with

With its own lusts that burn with feverous breath,

Lips which the loathsome bitterness of life

Leaves fearful of the bitterness of death.

# SIX YEARS OLD.

## To H. W. M.

BETWEEN the springs of six and seven,
Two fresh years' fountains, clear
Of all but golden sand for leaven.

Of all but golden sand for leaven, Child, midway passing here,

As earth for love's sake dares bless heaven,

So dare I bless you, dear.

Between two bright well-heads, that brighten

With every breath that blows
Too loud to lull, too low to frighten,
But fain to rock, the rose,

Your feet stand fast, your lit smiles lighten,

That might rear flowers from snows.

You came when winds unleashed were snarling

Behind the frost-bound hours,

A snow-bird sturdier than the starling,

A storm-bird fledged for showers, That spring might smile to find you, darling.

First-born of all the flowers.

Could love make worthy things of worthless,

My song were worth an ear: Its note should make the days most mirthless

The merriest of the year,

And wake to birth all buds yet birthless,

To keep your birthday, dear.

But where your birthday brightens heaven

No need has earth, God knows, Of light or warmth to melt or leaven

The frost or fog that glows
With sevenfold heavenly lights of seven
Sweet springs that cleave the snows.

Could love make worthy music of you, And match my Master's powers, Had even my love less heart to love

A better song were ours;

With all the rhymes like stars above you,

And all the words like flowers. SEPT. 30, 1880.

# A PARTING SONG.

(To a friend leaving England for a year's residence in Australia.)

THESE winds and suns of spring, That warm with breath and wing The trembling sleep of earth, till half awake

She laughes and blushes ere her slumber break,

For all good gifts they bring Require one better thing,

For all the loans of joy they lend us, borrow

One sharper dole of sorrow,
To sunder soon by half a world of sea
Her son from England, and my friend
from me.

Nor hope nor love nor fear May speed or stay one year, Nor song nor prayer may bid, as mine would fain.

The seasons perish and be born again, Restoring all we lend,

Reluctant, of a friend, — The voice, the hand, the presence, and

the sight, That lend their life and light

To present gladness and heart-strength ening cheer,

Now lent again for one reluctant year.

So much we lend indeed, Perforce, by force of need,

So much we must; even these things and no more,

The far sea sundering and the sundered shore

A world apart from ours, So much the imperious hours;

Exact, and spare not; but no more than these

All earth and all her seas

From thought and faith of trust and truth can borrow,

Not memory from desire, nor hope from sorrow.

Through bright and dark and bright Returns of day and night I bid the swift year speed, and change

and give

His breath of life to make the nex

year live With sunnier suns for us,

A life more prosperous, And laugh with flowers more fragrant that shall see

A merrier March for me,

A rosier-girdled race of night with

A goodlier April, and a tenderer May.

For him the inverted year Shall mark our seasons here With alien alternation, and revive This withered winter, slaying the spring

alive
With darts more sharply drawn

With darts more sharply drawn As nearer draws the dawn, In heaven transfigured over earth trans

formed, And with our winters warmed And wasted with our summers, till the beams

Rise on his face that rose on Dante's dreams.

Till fourfold morning rise Of star-shine on his eyes,

Dawn of the spheres that brand steep heaven across

At height of night with semblance of a

Whose grace and ghostly glory Poured heaven on purgatory,

Seeing with their flamelets risen all heaven grow glad

For love thereof it had

And lovely joy of loving; so may these

Make bright with welcome now their southern seas.

O happy stars, whose mirth The saddest soul on earth

That ever soared and sang, found strong to bless,

Lightening his life's harsh load of heaviness

With comfort sown like seed In dreams though not in deed, On sprinkled wastes of darkling thought

divine!

Let all your lights now shine With all as glorious gladness on his

For whom indeed, and not in dream, they rise.

As those great twins of air
Hailed once with old-world prayer
Of all folk alway faring forth by sea,
So now may these for grace and guidance be,

To guard his sail, and bring
Again to brighten spring
The face we look for, and the hand we
lack

Still, till they light him back,
As welcome as to first discovering eyes
Their light rose ever, soon on his to
rise.

As parting now he goes From snow-time back to snows, So back to spring from summer may next year

Restore him, and our hearts receive him here,—

The best good gift that spring Had ever grace to bring

At fortune's happiest hour of star-blest birth,

Back to love's home-bright earth,

To eyes with eyes that commune, hand with hand,

And the old warm bosom of all our mother-land.

Earth and sea-wind and sea And stars and sunlight be

Alike all prosperous for him, and all hours

Have all one heart, and all that heart as ours.

All things as good as strange, Crown all the seasons' change

With changing flower and compensating fruit

From one year's ripening root;

Till next year bring us, roused at spring's recall,

A heartier flower and goodlier fruit than all

MARCH 26, 1880.

# BY THE NORTH SEA.

I.

Ι.

A LAND that is lonelier than ruin;
A sea that is stranger than death;
Far fields that a rose never blew

Wan waste where the winds lack

breath; Waste endless and boundless, and

flowerless
But of marsh-blossoms fruitless as

But of marsh-blossoms fruitless at free;

Where earth lies exhausted, as powerless

To strive with the sea.

Far flickers the flight of the swallows, Far flutters the west of the grass Spun dense over desolate hollows,

More pale than the clouds as they

Thick woven as the web of a witch is Round the heart of a thrall that hath sinned,

Whose youth and the wrecks of its riches

Are waifs on the wind.

The pastures are herdless and sheepless,

No pasture or shelter for herds: The wind is relentless and sleepless, And restless and songless the birds; Their cries from afar fall breathless,

Their wings are as lightnings that flee:

For the land has two lords that are deathless, -Death's self, and the sea.

These twain, as a king with his fellow, Hold converse of desolate speech; And her waters are haggard and yellow And crass with the scurf of the beach; And his garments are gray as the hoary Wan sky where the day lies dim; And his power is to her, and his glory,

As hers unto him.

In the pride of his power she rejoices, In her glory he glows and is glad: In her darkness the sound of his voice

With his breath she dilates, and is mad:

"If thou slay me, O death, and outlive

Yet thy love hath fulfilled me of thee."

"Shall I give thee not back if thou give

O sister, O sea?"

6.

And year upon year dawns living, And age upon age drops dead: And his hand is not weary of giving, And the thirst of her heart is not

fed: And the hunger that moans in her pas-

And the rage in her hunger that roars,

As a wolf's that the winter lays lash on, Still calls and implores.

Her walls have no granite for girder, No fortalice fronting her stands; But reefs the bloodguiltiest of murder Are less than the banks of her sands These number their slain by the thou-

sand: For the ship hath no surety to be, When the bank is abreast of her bows,

Aflush with the sea.

No surety to stand, and no shelter To dawn out of darkness but one, Out of waters that hurtle and welter, No succor to dawn with the sun But a rest from the wind as it passes, Where, hardly redeemed from the

waves, Lie thick as the blades of the grasses The dead in their graves.

A multitude noteless of numbers, As wild weeds cast on an heap And sounder than sleep are their slum

And softer than song is their sleep; And sweeter than all things, and stran

The sense, if perchance it may be, That the wind is divested of danger, And scatheless the sea;

That the roar of the banks they breasted Is hurtless as bellowing of herds,

And the strength of his wings that invested

The wind, as the strength of a bird's: As the sea-mew's might or the swal-

That cry to him back if he cries, As over the graves and their hollows Days darken and rise.

#### II.

As the souls of the dead men disburdened

And clean of the sins that they sinned.

With a lovelier than man's life guer-

And delight as a wave's in the wind, And delight as the wind's in the billow, Birds pass, and deride with their glee The flesh that has dust for its pillow

12

As wrecks have the sea.

When the ways of the sun wax dim-

Wings flash through the dusk like beams;

As the clouds in the lit sky glimmer, The bird in the graveyard gleams;

As the cloud at its wing's edge whitens
When the clarions of sunrise are
heard,

The graves that the bird's note bright-

Grow bright for the bird.

#### 13.

As the waves of the numberless waters
That the wind cannot number who
guides,

Are the sons of the shore and the daughters

Here lulled by the chime of the tides;

And here in the press of them standing We know not if these or if we Live truliest, — or anchored to landing,

Or drifted to sea.

#### 14.

In the valley he named of decision, No denser were multitudes met When the soul of the seer in her vision Saw nations for doom of them set; Saw darkness in dawn, and the splen-

or
Of judgment, the sword and the rod.
But the doom here of death is more

And gentler the god.

tender.

## 15.

And gentler the wind from the dreary Sea-banks by the waves overlapped,

Being weary, speaks peace to the weary, From slopes that the tide-stream hath sapped;

And sweeter than all that we call so The seal of their slumber shall be Till the graves that embosom them also Be sapped of the sea.

## II.

## .

For the heart of the waters is cruel, And the kisses are dire of their lips, And their waves are as fire is to fuel

To the strength of the seafaring ships,

Though the sea's eye gleam as a jewel To the sun's eye back as he dips.

#### ,

Though the sun's eye flash to the sea's Live light of delight and of laughter, And her lips breathe back to the breeze

The kiss that the wind's lips waft her

From the sun that subsides, and sees
No gleam of the storm's dawn after

#### 3.

And the wastes of the wild sea-marches Where the borderers are matched in their might —

Bleak fens that the sun's weight parches,
Dense waves that reject his light—
Change under the change-colored
arches

Of changeless morning and night.

The waves are as ranks enrolled Too close for the storm to sever: The fens lie naked and cold, But their heart fails utterly never:

The lists are set from of old, And the warfare endureth forever.

## III.

Miles and miles and miles of desolation!

Leagues on leagues on leagues with-

out a change!

Sign or token of some eldest nation Here would make the strange land

not so strange.

Time-forgotten, yea since time's crea-

Seem these borders where the seabirds range.

Slowly, gladly, full of peace and wonder

Grows his heart who journeys here alone:

Earth and all its thoughts of earth sink under

Deep as deep in water sinks a stone; Hardly knows it if the rollers thunder, Hardly whence the lonely wind is blown.

Tall the plumage of the rush-flower tosses;

Sharp and soft in many a curve and

Gleam and glow the sea-colored marshmosses, Salt and splendid from the circling

Streak on streak of glimmering sea-

shine crosses All the land sea-saturate as with wine.

4.

Far, and far between, in divers orders, Clear gray steeples cleave the low gray sky;

Fast and firm as time-unshaken ward-

Hearts made sure by faith, by hope made high.

These alone in all the wild sea-borders Fear no blast of days and nights that

All the land is like as one man's face

Pale and troubled still with change of cares.

Doubt and death pervade her clouded spaces;

Strength and length of life and peace are theirs, -

Theirs alone amid these weary places, Seeing not how the wild world frets and fares.

6.

Firm and fast where all is cloud that changes,

Cloud-clogged sunlight, cloud by surlight thinned,

Stern and sweet, above the sand-hill ranges

Watch the towers and tombs of men that sinned

Once, now calm as earth, whose only change is

Wind, and light, and wind, and cloud, and wind.

Out and in and out the sharp straits wander.

In and out and in the wild way strives,

Starred and paved and lined with flowers that squander

Gold as golden as the gold of hives, Salt and moist and multiform; but yonder,

See, what sign of life or death survives?

Seen then only when the songs of olden Harps were young, whose echoes yet endure,

Hymned of Homer when his years

were golden,

Known of only when the world was

Here is Hades, manifest, beholden, Surely, surely here, if aught be sure!

Where the border-line was crossed, that, sundering

Death from life, keeps weariness from

None can tell, who fares here forward wondering;

None may doubt but here might end his quest.

Here life's lightning joys and woes

once thundering Sea-like round him cease like storm suppressed.

10.

Here the wise wave-wandering steadfast-hearted

Guest of many a lord, of many a

Saw the shape or shade of years departed,

Saw the semblance risen and hard at hand.

Saw the mother long from love's reach parted,

Anticleia, like a statue stand.

II.

Statue? nay, nor tissued image woven Fair on hangings in his father's hall; Nay, too fast her faith of heart was proven,

Far too firm her loveliest love of all; Love wherethrough the loving heart

was cloven,

Love that hears not when the loud Fates call.

Love that lives and stands up re-created Then when life has ebbed and anguish fled;

Love more strong than death or all things fated,

Child's and mother's, lit by love and

Love that found what life so long awaited

Here, when life came down among the dead.

13.

Here, where never came alive another, Came her son across the sundering

Crossed before by many a warrior

brother

Once that warred on Ilion at his side; Here spread forth vain hands to clasp the mother

Dead, that sorrowing for his love's sake died.

14.

Parted, though by narrowest of divis-

Clasp he might not, only might im-

Sundered yet by bitterest of derisions, Son, and mother from the son she bore -

Here? But all dispeopled here of vis-

Lies, forlorn of shadows even, the shore.

15.

All too sweet such men's Hellenic speech is,

All too fain they lived of light to see, Once to see the darkness of these beaches.

Once to sing this Hades found of

Ghostless, all its gulfs and creeks and reaches,

Sky, and shore, and cloud, and waste, and sea.

# IV.

Τ.

But aloft and afront of me faring
Far forward as folk in a dream
That strive, between doubting and daring,

Right on till the goal for them gleam, Full forth till their goal on them lighten,

The harbor where fain they would

What headlands there darken and brighten?

What change in the sea?

2.

What houses and woodlands that nestle

Safe inland to lee of the hill
As it slopes from the headlands that
wrestle

And succumb to the strong sea's will?

Truce is not, nor respite, nor pity;
For the battie is waged not of hands,
Where over the grave of a city
The ghost of it stands.

3.

Where the wings of the sea-wind slacken,

Green lawns to the landward thrive, Fields brighten and pine-woods blacken,

And the heat in their heart is alive; They blossom and warble and murmur.

For the sense of their spirit is free: But harder to shoreward and firmer The grasp of the sea.

1.

Like ashes the low cliffs crumble, The banks drop down into dust, The heights of the hills are made hum-

ble,
As a reed's is the strength of their

trust;

As a city's that armies environ, The strength of their stay is of sand:

But the grasp of the sea is as iron,

Laid hard on the land.

۲.

A land that is thirstier than ruin; A sea that is hungrier than death;

Heaped hills that a tree never grew in; Wide sands where the wave draws breath:

All solace is here for the spirit That ever forever may be

For the soul of thy son to inherit, My mother, my sea.

6.

O delight of the headlands and beaches! O desire of the wind on the wold,

More glad than a man's when it reaches
That end which it sought from of
old.

And the palm of possession is dreary

To the sense that in search of it

sinned;

But nor satisfied ever nor weary
Is ever the wind.

7.

The delight that he takes but in living
Is more than of all things that live;
For the world that has all things for

giving

Has nothing so goodly to give:
But more than delight his desire is,

For the goal where his pinions would be

Is immortal as air or as fire is, Immense as the sea.

8.

Though hence come the moan that he

From darkness and depths of the night,

Though hence be the spring of his sorrows,

Hence too is the joy of his might,— The delight that his doom is forever To seek, and desire, and rejoice,

And the sense that eternity never Shall silence his voice;

621

That satiety never may stifle, Nor weariness ever estrange,

Nor time be so strong as to rifle, Nor change be so great as to change

His gift that renews in the giving, The joy that exalts him to be

Alone of all elements living The lord of the sea.

10.

What is fire, that its flame should consume her?

More fierce than all fires are her

What is earth, that its gulfs should entomb her?

More deep are her own than their

graves.

Life shrinks from his pinions that cover The darkness by thunders bedinned; But she knows him, her lord and her lover.

The godhead of wind.

For a season his wings are about her, His breath on her lips for a space; Such rapture he wins not without her In the width of his world-wide race. Though the forests bow down, and the mountains

Wax dark, and the tribes of them

His delight is more deep in the foun-

And springs of the sea.

There are those too of mortals that love him,

There are souls that desire and require,

Be the glories of midnight above him, Or beneath him the daysprings of fire:

And their hearts are as harps that approve him

And praise him as chords of a lyre That were fain with their music to move him

To meet their desire.

13.

To descend through the darkness to grace them,

Till darkness were lovelier than light:

To encompass and grasp and embrace them.

Till their weakness were one with his might;

With the strength of his wings to caress them,

With the blast of his breath to set

With the mouths of his thunders to bless them

For sons of the sea.

14.

For these have the toil and the guerdon That the wind has eternally: these

Have part in the boon and the burden Of the sleepless, unsatisfied breeze,

That finds not, but seeking rejoices That possession can work him no

wrong; And the voice at the heart of their voice is

The sense of his song.

For the wind's is their doom and their blessing;

To desire, and have always above A possession beyond their possessing, A love beyond reach of their love.

Green earth has her sons and her daughters,

And these have their guerdons; but

Are the wind's, and the sun's, and the water's.

Elect of the sea.

V.

For the sea too seeks and rejoices, Gains and loses and gains,

And the joy of her heart's own choice

As ours, and as ours are her pains:

As the thoughts of our hearts are her voices,

And as hers is the pulse of our veins.

Her fields that know not of dearth, Nor lie for their fruit's sake fallow, Laugh large in the depth of their mirth; But inshore here in the shallow,

Embroiled with encumbrance of earth, Their skirts are turbid and yellow.

The grime of her greed is upon her, The sign of her deed is her soil; As the earth's is her own dishonor, And corruption the crown of her

She hath spoiled and devoured, and her honour

Is this, to be shamed by her spoil.

But afar where pollution is none, Nor ensign of strife nor endeavor, Where her heart and the sun's are one, And the soil of her sin comes never, She is pure as the wind and the sun, And her sweetness endureth forever.

## VI.

Death, and change, and darkness everlasting,

Deaf that hears not what the daystar saith, Blind past all remembrance and fore-

casting, Dead past memory that it once drew breath. -

These, above the washing tides and wasting,

Reign, and rule this land of utter death.

ness, hidden,

Very death of very death, begun

When none knows, — the knowledge is forbidden. -

Self-begotten, self-proceeding, one Born, not made - abhorred, unchained, unchidden.

Night stands here defiant of the sun-

Change of change, and death of death begotten,

Darkness born of darkness, one and three,

Ghostly godhead of a world forgotten, Crowned with heaven, enthroned on land and sea,

Here, where earth with dead men's bones is rotten,

God of Time, thy likeness worships thee.

Lo! thy likeness of thy desolation,

Shape and figure of thy might, O Lord.

Formless form, incarnate miscreation, Served of all things living, and abhorred;

Earth herself is here thine incarnation, Time, of all things born on earth adored.

All that worship thee are fearful of thee:

No man may not worship thee for fear:

Prayers nor curses prove not nor disprove thee,

Move nor change thee with our change of cheer:

All at last, though all abhorred thee, love thee,

God, the sceptre of whose throne is

Here thy throne and sceptre of thy station,

Here the palace paven for thy feet; Here thy sign from nation unto nation Passed as watchword for thy guards to greet, -

Change of change, darkness of dark- Guards that go before thine exaltation, Ages, clothed with bitter years and

sweet.

Here, where sharp the sea-bird shrills Low and loud and long, a voice forhis ditty.

Flickering flame-wise through the

clear live calm,

Fose triumphal, crowning all a city, Roofs exalted once with prayer and psalm,

Built of holy hands for holy pity,

Frank and fruitful as a sheltering palm.

8.

Church and hospice wrought in faultless fashion.

Hall and chancel bounteous and sublime,

Wide and sweet and glorious as com passion,

Filled and thrilled with force of

choral chime. Filled with spirit of prayer and thrilled

with passion, Hailed a god more merciful than

Time.

Ah! less mighty, less than Time prevailing,

Shrunk, expelled, made nothing at his nod.

Less than clouds across the sea-line

sailing, Lies he, stricken by his master's rod.

"Where is man?" the cloister mur murs wailing;

Back the mute shrine thunders—
"Where is God?"

Here is all the end of all his glory, -Dust, and grass, and barren silent Dead, like him, one hollow tower and

Naked in the sea-wind stands and

Filled and thrilled with its perpetual

Here, where earth is dense with dead men's bones.

Sounds the wind's clear story like a

Tomb from tomb the waves devouring

Dust from dust as years relapse along;

Graves where men made sure to rest, and never

Lie dismantled by the seasons' wrong.

Now displaced, devoured and desecrated.

Now by Time's hands darkly disinterred.

These poor dead that sleeping here awaited

Long the archangel's re-creating word.

Closed about with roofs and walls high-gated

Till the blast of judgment should be heard.

13.

Naked, shamed, cast out of consecration.

Corpse and coffin, yea, the very graves,

Scoffed at, scattered, shaken from their station.

Spurned and scourged of wind and sea like slaves,

Desolate beyond man's desolation, Shrink and sink into the waste of

waves.

14.

Tombs, with bare white piteous bones protruded,

Shroudless, down the loose collapsing banks,

Crumble, from their constant place detruded.

That the sea devours and gives not thanks.

Graves where hope and prayer and sorrow brooded

Gape and slide and perish, ranks on ranks.

15.

Rows on rows, and line by line they crumble, —

They that thought for all time through to be.

Scarce a stone whereon a child might stumble,

Breaks the grim field paced alone of me.

Earth, and man, and all their gods wax humble,

Here, where Time brings pasture to the sea.

#### VII.

Τ.

But afar on the headland exalted,
But beyond in the curl of the bay,
From the depth of his dome deep-vaulted,

Our father is lord of the day.
Our father and lord that we follow,
For deathless and ageless is he;
And his robe is the whole sky's hollow.

His sandal the sea.

2.

Where the horn of the headland is sharper,

And her green floor glitters with fire, The sea has the sun for a harper, The sun has the sea for a lyre.

The waves are a pavement of amber,
By the feet of the sea-winds trod,
To receive in a god's presence-chamber

Our father, the god.

3.

Time, haggard and changeful and hoary,

Is master and god of the land:
But the air is fulfilled of the glory
That is shed from our lord's right
hand.

U father of all of us ever, All glory be only to thee From heaven, that is void of thee never,
And earth, and the sea.

4.

O Sun1 whereof all is beholden,
Behold now the shadow of this death
This place of the sepulchres, olden
And emptied and vain as a breath,
The bloom of the bountiful heather

Laughs broadly beyond in thy light, As dawn, with her glories to gather, At darkness and night.

5.

Though the gods of the night lie rotten,

And their honor be taken away, And the noise of their names forgotten, Thou, Lord, art god of the day.

Thou art father, and saviour, and spirit, O Sun, of the soul that is free, And hath grace of thy grace to inherit

Thine earth and thy sea.

6.

The hills and the sands and the beaches,
The waters adrift and afar,
The banks and the creeks and the

reaches,

How glad of thee all these are!
The flowers, overflowing, overcrowded,
Are drunk with the mad wind's
mirth:

The delight of thy coming unclouded Makes music of earth.

1.

I, last least voice of her voices,
Give thanks that were mute in me
long

To the soul in my soul that rejoices

For the song that is over my song.

Time gives what he gains for the giv

ing,

Or takes for his tribute of me; My dreams to the wind ever-living,

My song to the sea.

## SONNETS.

### TO WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

THE larks are loud above our leagues of whin,

Now the sun's perfume fills their glo-

rious gold

With odor like the color all the wold Is only light and song and wind wherein These twain are blent in one with shin-

ing din.

And now your gift, a giver's kingly-souled,

Dear old fast friend whose honors grow not old,

Bids memory's note as loud and sweet

begin.

Though all but we from life be now gone forth

Of that bright household in our joyous

north Where I, scarce clear of boyhood just

at end,

First met your hand; yet under life's clear dome
Now seventy strenuous years have

crowned my friend,
Shines no less bright his full-sheaved

harvest-home.

APRIL 20, 1882.

# ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT.

Two souls diverse out of our human sight

Pass, followed one with love and each with wonder:

The stormy sophist with his mouth of thunder,

Clothed with loud words and mantled in the might

Of darkness and magnificence of night;

And one whose eye could smite the night in sunder,

Searching if light or no light were thereunder,

And found in love of loving-kindness light.

Duty divine and Thought with eyes of

Still following Righteousness with deep

Shone sole and stern before her and above

Sure stars and sole to steer by; but more sweet

Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly feet, —

The light of little children, and their love.

#### AFTER LOOKING INTO CAR-LYLE'S REMINISCENCES.

ī.

THREE men lived yet when this dead man was young,

Whose names and words endure forever: one

Whose eyes grew dim with straining toward the sun,

And his wings weakened, and his angel's tongue

Lost half the sweetest song was ever sung,

But like the strain half uttered, earth hears none,

Nor shall man hear till all men's songs are done;

One whose clear spirit like an eagle hung

625

Between the mountains hallowed by his his love

And the sky stainless as his soul above; And one, the sweetest heart that ever spake

The brightest words wherein sweet wis-

dom smiled. These deathless names by this dead snake defiled

Bid memory spit upon him for their sake.

#### II.

Sweet heart, forgive me for thine own sweet sake,

Whose kind blithe soul such seas of sorrow swam,

And for my love's sake, powerless as

For love to praise thee, or like thee to make

Music of mirth where hearts less pure

would break, Less pure than thine, our life-unspotted Lamb.

Things hatefullest thou hadst not heart to damn,

Nor wouldst have set thine heel on this dead snake.

Let worms consume its memory with its tongue,

The fang that stabbed fair Truth, the lip that stung Men's memories uncorroded with its

breath. Forgive me, that with bitter words like

his I mix the gentlest English name that is. The tenderest held of all that know not death.

### A LAST LOOK.

SICK of self-love, Malvolio, like an owl

That hoots the sun re-risen where starlight sank,

With German garters crossed athwart thy frank

Stout Scottish legs, men watched thee snarl and scowl,

And boys responsive with reverberate

Shrilled, hearing how to thee the springtime stank,

And as thine own soul all the world smelt rank,

And as thine own thoughts Liberty seemed foul.

Now, for all ill thoughts nursed and ill words given

Not all condemned, not utterly for given,

Son of the storm and darkness, pass in peace.

Peace upon earth thou knewest not. now, being dead,

Rest, with nor curse nor blessing on thine head,

Where high-strung hate and strenu ous envy cease.

#### DICKENS.

CHIEF in thy generation born of men Whom English praise acclaimed as English-born,

With eyes that matched the world wide eyes of morn

For gleam of tears or laughter, tenderest then

When thoughts of children warmed their light, or when Reverence of age with love and Son

labour worn, Or godlike pity fired with godlike A

Shot through them flame that winged lo thy swift live pen: Where stars and suns that we behold so n

not burn. Higher even than here, though high Thys

est was here thy place, Love sees thy spirit laugh and The

speak and shine With Shakespeare, and the soft bright of

soul of Sterne. And Fielding's kindliest might, and When

Goldsmith's grace; Scarce one more loved or worthier Butth

love than thine.

#### ON LAMB'S SPECIMENS OF DRAMATIC POETS.

IF all the flowers of all the fields on earth

By wonder-working summer were made one,

Its fragrance were not sweeter in the

Its treasure house of leaves were not more worth

Than those wherefrom thy light of musing mirth

Shone, till each leaf whereon thy pen would run

Breathed life, and all its breath was benison.

Beloved beyond all names of English birth,

More dear than mightier memories! gentlest name

That ever clothed itself with flowersweet fame.

Or linked itself with loftiest names of

By right and might of loving; I, that

Less than the least of those within thy fold.

Give only thanks for them to thee, Charles Lamb.

So many a year had borne its own bright bees

And slain them since thy honey-bees were hived,

John Day, in cells of flower-sweet verse contrived

So well with craft of moulding melodies,

Thy soul perchance in amaranth fields at ease

Thought not to hear the sound on earth revived

Of summer music from the spring derived

When thy song sucked the flower of flowering trees.

But thine was not the chance of every What power is in them all to praise the day:

Time, after many a darkling hour grew sunny, And light between the clouds ere

sunset swam,

Laughing, and kissed their darkness all away,

When, touched and tasted and approved, thy honey

Took subtler sweetness from the lips of Lamb.

#### CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

CROWNED, girdled, garbed, and shod with light and fire,

Son first-born of the morning, soveign star!

Soul nearest ours of all, that wert most far,

Most far off in the abysm of time, thy

Hung highest above the dawn-enkindled quire

Where all ye sang together, all that

And all the starry songs behind thy

Rang sequence, all our souls acclaim thee sire.

"If all the pens that ever poets held Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,"

And as with rush of hurtling chariots The flight of all their spirits were impelled

Toward one great end, thy glory -Nay, not then,

Not yet mightst thou be praised enough of men.

### WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Nor if men's tongues and angels' all in

Spake, might the word be said that might speak Thee.

Streams, winds, woods, flowers, fields, mountains, yea, the sea,

sun?

His praise is this, - he can be praised of none.

Man, woman, child, praise God for him; but he

Exults not to be worshipped, but to He is; and, being, beholds his work

well done. All joy, all glory, all sorrow, all strength,

all mirth, Are his: without him, day were night on earth.

Time knows not his from time's own period.

All lutes, all harps, all viols, all flutes, all lyres,

Fall dumb before him ere one string suspires.

All stars are angels; but the sun is God.

## BEN JONSON.

BROAD-BASED, broad-fronted, bounteous, multiform, With many a valley impleached with

ivy and vine, Wherein the springs of all the streams

run wine,

And many a crag full-faced against the storm,

The mountain where thy Muse's feet made warm

Those lawns that revelled with her dance divine,

Shines yet with fire as it was wont to shine

From tossing torches round the dance a-swarm.

Nor less, high-stationed on the gray grave heights,

High-thoughted seers with heaven's heart-kindling lights

Hold converse: and the herd of meaner things

Knows or by fiery scourge or fiery shaft When wrath on thy broad brows has risen, and laughed,

Darkening thy soul with shadow of thunderous wings.

### BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

An hour ere sudden sunset fired the west,

Arose two stars upon the pale deep

The hall of heaven was clear for night's high feast, Yet was not yet day's fiery heart at rest.

Love leapt up from his mother's burn ing breast

To see those warm twin lights, as day decreased.

Wax wider, till, when all the sur had ceased,

As suns they shone from evening's kindled crest.

Across them and between, a quicken ing fire, Flamed Venus, laughing with appeared

desire. Their dawn, scarce lovelier for the

gleam of tears, Filled half the hollow shell 'twix

heaven and earth With sound like moonlight, mingling moan and mirth,

Which rings and glitters down the darkling years.

### PHILIP MASSINGER.

CLOUDS here and there arisen an hou past noon

Checkered our English heaven wit lengthening bars

And shadow and sound of wheel winged thunder-cars

Assembling strength to put forth ten pest soon,

When the clear still warm concord thy tune Rose under skies unscared by redder

ing Mars, Yet, like a sound of silver speech o

stars,

With full mild flame as of the mellow ing moon.

Grave and great-hearted Massinger, th face

High melancholy lights with loftic grace

Than gilds the brows of revel: sad and wise,

The spirit of thought that moved thy deeper song,

Sorrow serene in soft calm scorn of wrong,

Speaks patience yet from thy majestic eyes.

## JOHN FORD.

HEW hard the marble from the moun-

Where hardest night holds fast in

iron gloom Gems brighter than an April dawn

in bloom,
That his Memnonian likeness thence

may start
Revealed, whose hand with high fune-

real art
Carved night, and chiselled shadow:

be the tomb

That speaks him famous graven with signs of doom,

Intrenched inevitably in lines athwart, As on some thunder-blasted Titan's brow

His record of rebellion. Not the

Shall strike forth music from so stern a chord,

Touching this marble: darkness, none knows how,

And stars impenetrable of midnight,

So looms the likeness of thy soul, John Ford.

### JOHN WEBSTER.

THUNDER: the flesh quails, and the soul bows down.

Night: east, west, south, and northward, very night.

Star upon struggling star strives into sight.

Star after shuddering star the deep storms drown.

The very throne of night, her very crown,

A man lays hand on, and usurps her right.

Song from the highest of heaven's imperious height

Shoots, as a fire to smite some towering town.

Rage, anguish, harrowing fear, heartcrazing crime,

Make monstrous all the murderous face of Time

Shown in the spheral orbit of a glass Revolving. Earth cries out from all her graves.

Frail, on frail rafts, across wide-wallowing waves,

Shapes here and there of child and mother pass.

#### THOMAS DECKER.

OUT of the depths of darkling life, where sin

Laughs piteously that sorrow should not know

Her own ill name, nor woe be counted woe;

Where hate and craft and lust make drearier din

Than sounds through dreams that grief holds revel in, —

What charm of joy-bells ringing, streams that flow,

Winds that blow healing in each note they blow,

Is this that the outer darkness hears begin?

() sweetest heart of all thy time save one,

Star seen for love's sake nearest to the sun,

Hung lamplike o'er a dense and doleful city,

Not Shakespeare's very spirit, howe'er more great,

Than thine toward man was more compassionate,

Nor gave Christ praise from lips more sweet with pity.

#### THOMAS MIDDLETON.

A WILD moon riding high from cloud to cloud,

That sees and sees not, glimmering far beneath.

Hell's children revel along the shuddering heath

With dirge-like mirth and raiment like a shroud;

A worse fair face than witchcraft's, passion-proud.

With brows blood-flecked behind their bridal wreath,

And lips that bade the assassin's sword find sheath

Deep in the heart whereto love's heart was vowed:

A game of close contentious crafts and creeds

Played till white England bring black Spain to shame;

A son's bright sword and brighter soul, whose deeds

High conscience lights for mother's love and fame;

Pure gypsy flowers, and poisonous courtly weeds:

Such tokens and such trophies crown thy name.

#### THOMAS HEYWOOD.

Tom, if they loved thee best who called thee Tom,

What else may all men call thee, seeing thus bright

Even yet the laughing and the weeping light

That still thy kind old eyes are kindled

Small care was thine to assail and overcome

Time and his child Oblivion: yet of right

Thy name has part with names of lordlier might

For English love and homely sense of home.

bay-leaf young,

And gives it place aloft among thy

Whence many a wreath once higher strong Time has harled; And this thy praise is sweet on Shake-

speare's tongue, -"O good old man! how wel' in thee

appears The constant service of the antique

world!"

## JOHN MARSTON.

THE bitterness of death and bitterer scorn

Breathes from the broad-leaf-d aloeplant whence thou

Wast fain to gather for thy bended

A chaplet by no gentler forehea l worn-Grief deep as hell, wrath hardly to be borne,

Ploughed up thy soul till round the furrowing plough

The strange black soil foamed, as a black-beaked prow Bids night-black waves foam where its

track has torn.

Too faint the phrase for thee that only Scorn bitterer than the bitterness of

death Pervades the sullen splendor of thy

Where hate and pain make war on

force and fraud, And all the strengths of tyrants: whence unflawed

It keeps this noble heart of hatred whole.

## GEORGE CHAPMAN.

HIGH priest of Homer, not elect in vain,

Deep trumpets blow before thee, shawms behind

Mix music with the rolling wheels that wind

Whose fragrance keeps thy small sweet | Slow through the laboring triumph of thy train:

Fierce history, molten in thy forging brain,

Takes form and fire and fashion from

thy mind,

Tormented and transmuted out of kind:

But howsoe'er thou shift thy strenuous

Like Tailor smooth, like Fisher swollen, and now

swollen, and now Grim Yarrington<sup>3</sup> scarce bloodier

marked than thou,

Then bluff as Mayne's 4 or broadmouthed Barry's 5 glee,

Proud still with hoar predominance of

And beard like foam swept off the broad blown sea,

Where'er thou go, men's reverence goes with thee.

### JOHN DAY.

DAY was a full-blown flower in heaven, alive

With murmuring joy of bees and birds a-swarm,

When in the skies of song yet flushed and warm

With music where all passion seems to strive

For utterance, all things bright and fierce to drive

Struggling along the splendor of the storm,

Day for an hour put off his fiery form,

And golden murmurs from a golden hive

Across the strong bright summer wind were heard,

And laughter soft as smiles from girls at play, And loud from lips of boys brow-

And loud from lips of boys browbound with May.

<sup>1</sup> Author of The Hog hath lost his Pearl.
<sup>2</sup> Author of Fuimus Troes, or the True Trojans.

Author of Two Tragedies in One.
 Author of The City Match.

5 Author of Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks.

Our mightiest age let fall its gentlest word,

When Song, in semblance of a sweet small bird,

Lit fluttering on the light swift hand of Day.

## JAMES SHIRLEY.

THE dusk of day's decline was hard on dark

When evening trembled round thy glowworm lamp

That shone across her shades and dewy damp,

A small clear beacon whose benignant spark

Was gracious yet for loiterers' eyes to mark,

Though changed the watchword of our English camp

Since the outposts rang round Marlowe's lion ramp,

When thy steed's pace went ambling round Hyde Park.

And in the thickening twilight under thee

Walks Davenant, pensive in the paths where he,

The blithest throat that ever carolled love

In music made of morning's merriest heart,

Glad Suckling, stumbled from his seat above,

And reeled on slippery roads of alien art.

### THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.

Sons born of many a loyal Muse to Ben,

All true-begotten, warm with wine or ale,

Bright from the broad light of his presence, hail!

Prince Randolph, nighest his throne of all his men,

Being highest in spirit and heart who hailed him then

King, nor might other spread so blithe a sail:

Cartwright, a soul pent in with narrower pale,

Praised of thy sire for manful might of pen:

Marmion, whose verse keeps alway keen and fine

The perfume of their Apollonian wine, Who shared with that stout sire of all and thee

The exuberant chalice of his echoing shrine:

Is not your praise writ broad in gold which he

Inscribed, that all who praise his name should see?

## ANONYMOUS PLAYS: "ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM."

MOTHER whose womb brought forth our man of men,

Mother of Shakespeare, whom all time acclaims

Queen therefore, sovereign queen of English dames,

Throned higher than sat thy sonless empress then,

Was it thy son's young passion-guided pen

Which drew, reflected from encircling flames, A figure marked by the earlier of thy

names
Wife, and from all her wedded kins-

women

Marked by the sign of murderess?

Pale and great,

Great in her grief and sin, but in her death

And anguish of her penitential breath Greater than all her sin or sin-born fate.

She stands, the holocaust of dark desire,

Clothed round with song forever as with fire.

#### ANONYMOUS PLAYS.

YE too, dim watchfires of some darkling hour, Whose fame forlorn time saves not

T

nor proclaims

Forever, but forgetfulness defames, And darkness and the shadow of death devour.

Lift up ye too your light, put forth your power,

Let the far twilight feel your soft

small flames,
And smile, albeit night name not

even their names,
Ghost by ghost passing, flower blown

Ghost by ghost passing, flower blown down on flower;
That sweet-tongued shadow, like a star's

that passed Singing, and light was from its dark-

ness cast
To paint the face of Painting fair
with praise: 1

And that wherein forefigured smiles the pure

Fraternal face of Wordsworth's Eli-

Between two child-faced masks of merrier days.<sup>2</sup>

## ANONYMOUS PLAYS.

More yet and more, and yet we mark not all:

The Warning fain to bid fair women heed

Its hard brief note of deadly doom and deed;<sup>3</sup>

The verse that strewed too thick with flowers the hall Whence Nero watched his fiery festi-

Whence Nero watched his fiery festival; 4

That iron page wherein men's eyes who read

See, bruised and marred between two babes that bleed,

<sup>1</sup> Doctor Dodypol.

Nobody and Somebody.
A Warning for Fair Women.
The Tragedy of Nero.

A mad red-handed husband's martyr fall: 1

The scene which crossed and streaked with mirth the strife

Of Henry with his sons and witchlike wife; 2

And that sweet pageant of the kindly Who, seeing three friends in spirit

and heart made one,

Crowned with good hap the true-love wiles he screened

In the pleached lanes of pleasant Edmonton.3

#### THE MANY.

GREENE, garlanded with February's few flowers.

Ere March came in with Marlowe's rapturous rage;

Peele, from whose hand the sweet white locks of age

Took the mild chaplet woven of honored hours:

Nash, laughing hard; Lodge, flushed from lyric bowers;

And Lilly, a goldfinch in a twisted cage,

Fed by some gay great lady's pettish

Till short sweet songs gush clear like short spring showers; Kid, whose grim sport still gambolled

over graves; And Chettle, in whose fresh funereal

Weeps Marian yet on Robin's wild-

wood hearse; Cooke, whose light boat of song one

soft breath saves. Sighed from a maiden's amorous

mouth averse: Live likewise ye: Time takes not you

for slaves.

1 A Yorkshire Tragedy.

Look about you.
The Merry Devil of Edmonton.

#### THE MANY.

#### II.

HAUGHTON, whose mirth gave woman all her will;

Field, bright and loud with laughing flower and bird,

And keen alternate notes of laud and gird;

Barnes, darkening once with Borgia's deeds the quill

Which tuned the passion of Partheno-

Blithe burly Porter, broad and bold of word;

Wilkins, a voice with strenuous pity stirred:

Turk Mason; Brewer, whose tongue drops honey still;

Rough Rowley, handling song with

Esau's hand; Light Nabbes; lean Sharpham, rank and raw by turns,

But fragrant with a forethought once of Burns:

Soft Davenport, sad-robed, but blithe and bland;

Brome, gypsy-led across the woodland ferns:

Praise be with all, and place among our band.

### EPILOGUE.

OUR mother, which wast twice, as his tory saith,

Found first among the nations: once, when she

Who bore thine ensign saw the God in thee

Smite Spain, and bring forth Shakespeare; once, when death

Shrank, and Rome's bloodhounds cowered, at Milton's breath:

More than thy place, then first among the free;

More than that sovereign lordship of the sea

Bequeathed to Cromwell from Elizabeth:

More than thy fiery guiding-star, which Drake
Hailed, and the deep saw lit again for Blake;
More than all deeds wrought of thy strong right hand,—

This praise keeps most thy fame's memorial strong,
That thou wast head of all these streams of song,
And time bows down to thee as Shakespeare's land.

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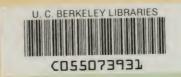
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